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Cover picture

A South African farm worker's family. On this particular farm, workers earn 180 Rand, or about £36, a
year. The photograph is taken from *Working Women in South Africa* by Lesley Lewis (144pp, Pluto,
£5.95, 0 7453 0206 8).

An artist constructs a science

P. N. Johnson-Laird

JAMES V. WERTSCH
Vygotsky and the Social Formation of Mind
262pp. Harvard University Press. £20.50.
0674 943503

Russian psychology began before the era of
Marxism-Leninism but with a materialism en-
tirely compatible with it. Its founding father,
Ivan Sechenov, argued that behaviour was
moulded by environment and that mental phe-
nomena could be reduced to physiology. This
prescience was a characteristic instance of bad
timing from which, and for which, Russian
psychologists have nearly always suffered. The
doctrine would have gone down splendidly
after the Revolution, still better in the 1940s,
but unfortunately Sechenov published in Tsar-
ist Russia. His book was considered subver-
sive, and his career never fully recovered.

His chief successor, Ivan Pavlov, was in-
terested in only one thing: the digestive tract,
apparently as a result of reading G. H. Lewes's
popular book, *The Physiology of Common*
Life, at an impressionable age. And he knew
just one big thing: the systematic methods of
German experimental physiology. The world
thinks of him as the discoverer of the con-
ditioned reflex. He tormented dogs, said Ber-
nard Shaw, to show that their mouths water at
the sound of the dinner gong. (He added that
the best prophylactic for such despicable be-
haviour would have been singing lessons, pre-
ferably from Shaw's mother.) In fact, Pavlov
did not discover the conditioned reflex, which
had been known for at least a century, but
rather some of its underlying principles and
ramifications. He observed, for instance, a cu-
rious incident with dogs that did not salivate.
They had been shown the food repeatedly, but
not allowed to eat it. When someone slammed
a door, however, their mouths spontaneously
started to water again.

Not even Pavlov was exempt from bad
timing; he did not have a secure job until past
the age of forty. His rival, Vladimir Bechterev,
anticipated Pavlov's conversion to a physio-
logical account of conditioning, and achieved
more rapid promotion. He knew many things—
psychiatry, brain surgery, experimental
psychology—and played fox to Pavlov's hedge-
hog. But the hedgehog finally outwitted the
fox. In a public challenge, Pavlov conditioned
two dogs said by Bechterev to be uncondition-
able.

The crude materialism of early Russian
psychology, much as it was to please Lenin and
Stalin, owed nothing to Marx. Indeed, there
has only ever been one major attempt to
formulate a Marxist psychology. It happened
just after the Revolution, when the younger
generation of psychologists was inspired to re-
construct the subject on Marxist principles,
though admitting a few alien ideas such as the
Unconscious. The leading figure in this move-
ment was Vygotsky, the protagonist of James
Wertsch's book. The psychologists' enthu-
siasm, like that of many others, was premature.

When Stalin's purges began, their work
was condemned as perverse. They recanted in
public or disappeared, or both. Western sci-
ence and "cosmopolitanism" (ie, Jewish) influ-
ences on psychology were denounced by the Central
Committee of the Communist Party. Pavlov
became a Hero of the Revolution and a kind of
posthumous Lysenko; Vygotsky, the real hero
of Soviet psychology, was expunged from the
textbooks. After Stalin died, the extreme ver-
sions of Pavlovian reflexology were in turn
denounced as "vulgar materialism", and, at
last, psychologists could pursue their ideas
wherever they led—into information theory,
general linguistics, and computer modelling—
always provided they asserted that these
ideas were compatible with dialectical mater-
ialism.

James Wertsch is an American linguist; who
has made several trips to the Soviet Union, and
himself addressed the International Psychol-
ogical Congress held in London in 1968, he too
electrified his audience by speaking brilliantly
in English and without notes, having, in a
typical gesture, torn them up in dissatisfaction
just as he was about to speak.

Soon after his arrival in Moscow, Vygotsky
completed a thesis on the psychology of art
based in part on his earlier analysis of Hamlet

and Wertsch's own attempt to bring
them up to date. His scholarship is exemplary:
the book is the most detailed account in
English of its subject's life and work. It will
be welcomed by cognitive psychologists and
students of development.

Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (he later
changed his name to Vygotzky) was born in
1896 near Minsk, one of eight children in an
intellectual Jewish family. His father was a
bank administrator; his mother was trained as
a teacher. During childhood, he learned to
love literature and the arts. He also liked to
debate in public and to recite poetry, with the
curious habit of deliberately skipping certain
lines on the grounds that abbreviation had a
heightened significance. Despite his brilliance
at school, his path to Moscow University was
not straightforward. The Tsarist minister of

and imbued with the ideas of Russian Formal-
ism. He also became seriously ill with tubercu-
losis. Thereafter his life was largely a race be-
tween his work and his illness. This pressure,
and his vision of re-structuring psychology,
scem, Wertsch says, to have created an almost
messianic impact on all who encountered him.
His genius was no doubt fuelled by the intellec-
tual excitement of the post-revolutionary
years. There were many practical problems for
psychology to solve—massive illiteracy, vast
cultural differences among the Soviet peoples,
and a lack of remedial education for the men-
tally and physically impaired. Vygotsky set up
laboratories and clinics, he trained teachers, he
supervised students, he carried out research,
he wrote and translated, he toured the country
to lecture on psychology, he even entered
medical school to study neurology.



Antonia Mendez's untitled gelatin silver print can be seen in the exhibition *The Animal in Photography*
1843-1985 (catalogue available from the Photographers' Gallery, 30pp, £4.75, 0 907 79 09 8) at the
Photographers' Gallery, 3 and 5 Great Newport Street, London WC2, until September 6.

education had decreed that the 3 per cent
quota of Jews was to be chosen by lottery from
the ablest students. Vygotsky was lucky. He
graduated with a degree in law in 1917, but he
had also studied psychology, philosophy and
literature. He returned to his home town and
taught there throughout the revolutionary
years. He read widely, and, according to
Wertsch, the authors prominent in his reading
ranged from poets such as Blok, Maedelstam
and Pushkin, to psychologists such as James,
Freud and Pavlov—all it would seem in prepa-
ration for the single most important event in his
life: his address to the Second All-Russian
Psychoneurological Congress in 1924.

Vygotsky spoke on the relation between
conditioned reflexes and consciousness, and
this theme prefigures the rest of his intellectual
career. Psychology is in essence a series of
reactions to Descartes's dualism. One reaction
is to deny the relevance of the mind and to seek
refuge in reflexes, behaviour and physiology.
Another is to abandon materialism and to seek
refuge in introspection, subjective phenomena
and idealism. Vygotsky saw that neither
approach was correct. But for him, as Wertsch
points out, the problem was that neither could
accommodate the Marxian assumption that in
order to understand the individual, one must
first understand the social relations in which
the individual exists, since social life deter-
mines consciousness.

One of Vygotsky's future students, A. R.
Luria, who was himself to become a major
neuropsychologist, attended the 1924 con-
gress. He wrote later that Vygotsky delivered
his paper without notes, and in a manner
which, together with its content, electrified the
audience. Immediately afterwards, this un-
known teacher from a small provincial town
was invited to join the Moscow Psychological
Institute. As a historical footnote, when Luria
himself addressed the International Psychol-
ogical Congress held in London in 1968, he too
electrified his audience by speaking brilliantly
in English and without notes, having, in a
typical gesture, torn them up in dissatisfaction
just as he was about to speak.

Soon after his arrival in Moscow, Vygotsky
completed a thesis on the psychology of art
based in part on his earlier analysis of Hamlet

He was an extraordinary man. Wertsch cites
two testimonials. Luria remarked that his own
career had two stages—a vacuum before he met
Vygotsky, and a significant period thereafter in
which he merely elaborated some of his
teacher's ideas. Eisenstein, the film director,
wrote that he loved "this marvellous man with
his strange haircut... who saw the world with
celestial clarity".

How did Vygotsky attempt to reconcile re-
flex, society and consciousness? Wertsch iden-
tifies three main components of the answer:
the thesis, inspired by Engels, that tools and
their psychological correlates, signs, are criti-
cal in mental life; the Marxian assumption that
thinking has its origins in social processes; and
an emphasis on studying development.

Vygotsky held that only studies of the evolu-
tionary, historical and individual development
of psychological phenomena can provide an
explanation of them. Development, however,
is not a result of a single set of principles, since
there are sometimes fundamental dislocations
in which the principles of development them-
selves change. Evolution proceeded until
culture became possible and having
passed on the baton dropped out of the race.
One principle took over where another left off
—the archetypal manoeuvre in Vygotsky's con-
ception of development. What enters at such
revolutionary transitions is some new form of
mediation, such as the invention of tools in the
life of apes, or of labour in the life of human
beings. With the emergence of culture,
Vygotsky assumed that the principle of natural
selection was replaced by another, namely,
that the meanings of signs became independent
of their context of use. (Wertsch calls this idea,
"the principle of decontextualization of medi-
ated means"—a phrase which paradoxically
fails to abide by the very principle to which it
refers.)

Vygotsky distinguished between elementary
and higher mental processes. Elementary pro-
cesses, such as perception and memory, are
under the control of the environment, and they
develop as a result of biological maturation.
His views about these processes are not clear—
other than that they are, in Marx's word,
"natural"—and Wertsch does not discuss them.
I imagine that Vygotsky would have favoured

Plekhanov's theory of perception in which
symbols represent objects by virtue of their
similarity in structure, and that he would have
objected to Lenin's simplistic dogma that
perception yields direct copies of objects. In
fact, Vygotsky almost always worked on higher
forms of thought, such as abstract reasoning.
He believed that it depends on a deliberate and
conscious manipulation of contextually inde-
pendent signs, and that the transition to such a
higher process of thought occurs as a result of
social forces. Key parts in the transition are
played by school, by instruction from adults,
and by learning to read: culture is the deter-
mining factor in the intellectualization of the
mind.

Vygotsky and Luria together studied the
reasoning ability of a non-literate people in
Uzbekistan, a remote region of Soviet Central
Asia. They discovered that these people did
indeed have difficulty in grasping abstract rela-
tions. If they were given pictures of, say, a
hammer, a saw, a log and a hatchet, and asked
to say which three went together, then they did
not select the three tools. They were influ-
enced by their experience of the practical con-
text of using hammers and saws on logs. After
only a year or two of schooling, however, peo-
ple from the same culture could readily form
the appropriate grouping. Vygotsky tended to
treat literacy as a homogeneous phenomenon:
you could not think about things out of context
until you had learned to read. Modern investi-
gators have qualified this view. Mere literacy,
such as the singular ability to read a sacred text,
does not enhance intellectual competence.

Marx had stressed the primacy of action, and
this idea lies behind Vygotsky's theory of the
development of consciousness. It depends on
social forces, which operate, as Wertsch puts
it, "independently of individual human plans
or volition". Vygotsky's guiding principle is
accordingly that children first learn to interact
with others socially, and then develop higher
mental processes as a result of "internalizing"
these actions. Coincidentally, the importance
of action, though not deriving from Marx,
inspired that other influential student of the
genesis of intelligence, Jean Piaget. He argued
that there is a unitary set of principles under-
lying all development, and that children
develop autonomously; education must
extend their development. They first act on
the world physically, and their intelligence
is then formed from "internalizing"
these actions.

The conflict between Piagetian and Vygot-
skian theories reached its climax over the case
of children's "egocentric speech". Young chil-
dren often talk to themselves as they are trying
to carry out some task. A two-year-old in one
of Wertsch's own studies, for example, uttered
the following commentary on an attempt to fit
together a puzzle containing animal figures:
"Hm... Oh wh-oh, me got duck. Snake.
Snake. Break. Puppy. Ta goo do. This snake,
snake...". For Piaget, such speech is merely
the child thinking aloud; it has no communica-
tive function, and disappears as the child be-
gins to enter fully into human society. For
Vygotsky, however, it is a form found in the
transition from ordinary communicative
speech to genuinely inner speech, which is an
internal and abbreviated form of language that
is used to plan and regulate actions. He made
three observations that seemed to bear out his
contention. First, children talk more often in
this way when a problem gets more difficult.
Second, they talk less often in this way when
there is no obvious audience. Third, their
egocentric speech becomes more incompre-
hensible as they grow older.

Unlike Piagetian theory, Vygotsky's ideas
have implications for pedagogical technique.
He noted that different children can have the
same accomplishments, yet differ in their
ability to benefit from adult instruction. He
referred to this distance from current to poten-
tial achievement under adult guidance as "the
zone of proximal development". Instruction
should ideally occur within this zone. The
hypothesis is borne out by some recent re-
search, though it is reminiscent of the old idea
that children should be taught just slightly in
advance of their ability.

Vygotsky devised a simple task which re-
vealed some interesting differences between
adults' and children's concepts. Wooden
blocks differing in shape, colour, size and

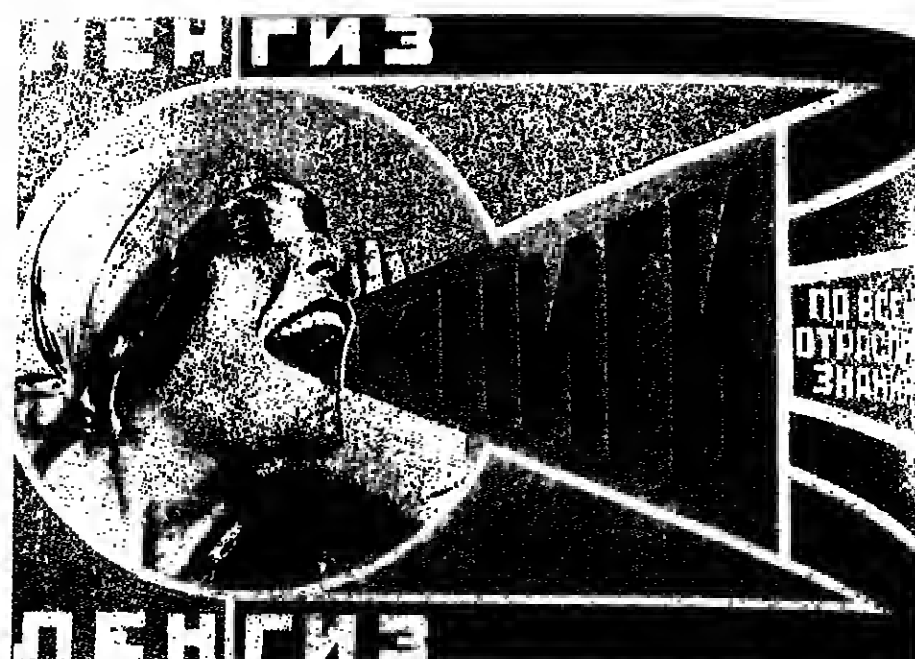
thickness, are laid out on a table, and one of them is turned over to reveal a nonsense label, such as "MUR", stuck beneath it. The child (or adult) who is being tested then has to sort together all those blocks likely to have the same label. Very young children tend to lump on the basis of subjective criteria, but because they make a nice pattern. At a later stage, children make their selections on the basis of objective criteria but not in a stable way: one block suggests another in a chain of responses highly dependent on context. Children next grasp the reference of the concept and sort together an appropriate set of objects, but they have yet to master its sense, i.e. its stable relations to other concepts independent of context. Hence, when the experimenter turns over one of the blocks that they have selected revealing that it does not have the label "MUR", they remove it from the pile but do nothing about other similarly offending selections. Only by interacting with adults, Vygotsky claimed, do children finally enter the sense of a concept. His sentences yield a plausible account of how children master sense and reference. What modern research has shown is that matters are not quite so uniform as he imagined. George Miller and his colleagues have discovered, for example, that children's grasp of the reference of colour terms does not properly stabilize until they have worked out the basic contrastive relations among the terms.

Wertsch is nupt at pointing out Vygotsky's shortcomings. He failed to formulate a proper theory of elementary mental processes; he overlooked the role of syntax in language; he proposed a radical discontinuity between evolutionary and cultural processes that is incompatible with anthropological evidence. Yet Wertsch seems so immersed in the Vygotskian world that, forgivably, its major flaw escapes

him. Vygotsky was an artist trying to construct a scientific psychology in an era when the only language for theories was the vernacular. Many of his most potent thoughts are condensed into poetic aphorisms: "A word is a microcosm of human consciousness." "A frightened goose suddenly aware of danger and rousing the whole flock with its cries does not tell the others what it has seen but rather communicates them with its fear." "A speaker often takes several minutes to disclose one thought. In his mind the whole thought is present at once, but in speech it has to be developed successively. A thought may be compared to a cloud shedding a shower of words." To find a comparable expression of ideas, one must go to the notebooks of Paul Valéry. What the poetry masks, of course, is the vagueness of the theory.

There is no comprehensive psychology in Marx, merely a heap of unorganized ideas—the rejection of idealism, the thesis that knowledge is based on sensory evidence, the concept of natural action in society, the notion of alienation, the false consciousness of an ideology. One can try to link these ideas together within a grand theory, but the attempt will seem worthwhile only in a context where its necessary vagueness is not objectionable. Vygotsky worked in such a context, and he was a great psychologist because he realized that consciousness had to be explained, not eliminated or reduced to physiology, and because he grasped that the mind contains non-conscious mechanisms.

But he was a man of his time, and since then there has been a major revolution in psychology. The computer has provided psychologists with a language for theorizing that replaces poetry with precise and explicit accounts of mental processes. Wertsch has attempted to bring Vygotsky up to date, and he tells us that



Alexander Radchanko's "Books far all Branches of Learning" is here reproduced from *Lives of the Great Twentieth Century Artists* by Edward Lucie-Smith (360pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £25. 0 297 78864 1). Notable painters and sculptors are discussed in groups under section headings. The book begins with "Towards the Modern" (Edward Munch, Pierre Bonnard, Kathi Kollwitz, Aristide Maillol) and ends with "The Artist and the Art-work" (Yves Klein, Joseph Beuys).

some of his colleagues have objected that these ideas are not part of the true Vygotskian tradition. A more serious objection, however, is that they suffer from the same vagueness. Modern Vygotskians must come to terms with the impact of computation on conceptions of the mind. They must offer an explicit theory that can be modelled in a computer program in the same way that one can model, say, the economy, or the weather, or quantum electrodynamics. No Marxist psychology is likely to meet this demand, and Vygotsky's grand theory will probably not be followed by

another in the foreseeable future. The last years of Vygotsky's life were a blur of frenzied work, terrifying attacks of coughing and bleeding, and exhaustion—a pattern now thankfully remote from us, but so familiar from the accounts of other heroic victims of tuberculosis. He died in a Moscow sanatorium in 1934; he was thirty-seven years old. Had he lived he might have shared the fate of some of his colleagues: his death was perhaps the best-timed event in Russian psychology. Soon afterwards, his work was banned.

brings in as support. For instance, the fact that neonates have keen and imitative perceptual abilities can hardly be taken as "vindication" of Lacan's theory that the beginnings of identity are founded in a composite of images, sounds and other sensory responses that merge the internal with the external. This is no more than circumstantial evidence which could equally well be encompassed within other theories, even a Skinnerian one. It is in any case premature to claim that empirical findings at the level we now have them can bear out the theory.

On the other hand, Ragland-Sullivan dismisses somewhat cursorily those theorists who have reread Freud and Lacan in more radical ways (Julia Kristeva, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari) and orient them towards social hope rather than dour scepticism. In her final chapter, however, she wants to show that the insertion of the subject into the law of language does not mean that it cannot struggle for freedom in a particular society and that Lacan's thought can give us "the basis of a new theory on which to continue the re-writing of woman's and man's history".

Here is an interesting and courageous book, which will itself provoke further controversy because of its uncompromising championing of Lacan.

By contrast *The Works of Jacques Lacan* appears somewhat cautious and circumspect, as if anxious to promote Lacan without giving offence to anyone. Bice Benvenuto and Roger Kennady are not entirely in agreement about their evaluation of Lacan's contribution, but it is a pity that their objections are levelled against his autocratic stance in both theory and practice rather than channelled into serious engagements with his theory.

Unlike Ragland-Sullivan, Benvenuto and Kennady have undertaken to present Lacan's thought in linear form, beginning with his work on paranoid psychoses in 1932 and ending with his seminar on feminine sexuality. *Encore*, in the early 1970s. The chapters in between deal chronologically with major aspects of his work and usefully map out his departure from both Kleinian and orthodox Freudian theory. One of the best chapters, "The Oedipus Complex", clarifies the distinction between an object-relations theory (Klein) which focuses on a

pre-verbal mother-child relationship, and a potential one in Freud which concentrates on the triangular structure of the complex and the way the different types of relation between the three terms—father, mother, child—are internalized in the psyche, becoming for Freud the nuclear complex of the neuroses and carrying with it such phantasies as seduction, primal scene and castration. For Lacan the Oedipus complex has not three but four terms. Neither the mother nor the father can completely define the child, but its always provisional identity, or subjectivity, as Lacan would have it, depends on its insertion into a signifying system which is already there and predetermines subject's place in language and desire. The fourth term in Lacan's Oedipal system is the phallus, as the signifier around which every one's desire circulates, including the father's. For it is one of the cornerstones of Lacan's theory that the phallus is not to be equated with the penis, and hence, in theory at any rate, it is also the father's problem. According to Lacan, the phallus is the signifier of lack in general, since it is the mother's lack of it which elevates it into a phantasy-object for any human subject, whatever their biological gender.

It is one of the several merits of this book that it manages to make the general welter of psychoanalytic notions appear intelligible and reasonably persuasive. Like Ragland-Sullivan, the authors approve of Lacan's interest in going outside the boundaries of clinical practice to other disciplines in general and philosophy in particular in order to formulate and advance his theories. The most ambitious part of their book deals with Lacan's concept of sexual desire and its relation to death, in the chapters declared by the authors, who—unlike Ragland-Sullivan—are uneasy about relinquishing Lacan's own style, to be more in the spirit of his writing than the real, though that is puzzling, as they certainly do not make use of his notorious puns and non-sequiturs. They rather follow and gloss the master's words.

However, this is a well-organized book, concerned in a modest way with the context of Lacanianism as a whole, about which it is often read alongside each other as different forms of commitment to the theory and practice of

Miscast in dialogue form

Martha Nussbaum

IRIS MURDOCH
Acasias
128pp. Chatto and Windus. £8.95.
0 7011 3032 6

In Plato's *Phaedo*, Socrates' friends arrive at his cell expecting to feel pity and grief at the death of a beloved friend. Instead they find themselves engaging in philosophical argument. Dialogue with Socrates leads them away from personal concerns to a detached search for general truths. Traditional tragic emotions come to seem inappropriate: *Phaedo* notices with surprise his own lack of pity. Apollodorus is reproved for his "womanish" grief. Through the drama of philosophical reason, these people transcend drama. If we read well, we too are led out of our private concerns into the impersonal realm of intellect. Plato here borrows drama's power to enthrall the reader, who can receive nothing as from an authority, but must, like the characters, puzzle out for him or herself what the truth might be. He also draws on drama's power to depict the motivations behind a claim, the connections of a position with a way of life. But in the process he repudiates drama: for he tells us that if we attend truly to the world we will not care about the personal and transient things that now give rise to blind grief and passionate desire, the stuff of drama. We will instead commit ourselves to reason's search for stable and knowable forms. The dialogue shows us literature overcoming itself.

It is easy to see why Iris Murdoch might be drawn to the idea of writing philosophy as Platonic dialogue. Throughout her work she has insisted that our besetting vice is our obsession with the personal, which mires us in fantasy, preventing our ascent to an objective, loving vision of good. "Egoistic fantasy", the delusions of love, these need to be cut through by a dialectical practice that will free the soul from constraint and lead it to impersonal love. We would expect a Murdochian dialogue to preserve concern for particular people and

things, and not to follow Plato when he insists that we ought to see particulars simply as participants in universal forms. But vision of particularity need not be personalized vision; and since for Murdoch all true vision is free of subjective interest, she is just as ready as Plato to urge us towards impersonality.

It is, then, with eagerness that we turn to *Acasias*. We expect to find here the working out of Platonic ideas about the relation between philosophy and its literary form; and to find embodied in this form some rich and challenging Platonic arguments. We look, too, for an acknowledgment, by a writer who has persistently denied that her literary and philosophical activities have any important common link, that there is, after all, a fruitful relationship between them. On almost every level, our expectations are disappointed.

The slim volume contains no introduction and two brief dialogues. The first, "Art and Eros", depicts a conversation between Socrates and several friends about the definition of art. Callisto defines art as a schematic copying of nature. Acasias proposes, instead, that (good) art is a loving vision of reality. Mantias speaks of art's social usefulness. All these accounts are criticized by Socrates, who then inserts some observations about metaphysical realism and the nature of language. The young Plato bursts in with a passionate denunciation of art for its power to nourish baneful fantasy and promote an acceptance of imperfection. Socrates (who here resembles Aristotle) argues that our goal should be not absolute good, but the human good, and that good art has a valuable role to play in showing us that.

The dialogue on religion, "Above the Gods", depicts an argument among a rationalist who holds that religion is simply a primitive, though socially useful, form of morality; a proto-Marxist who attacks religion as a drug that makes people resist social change; Acasias, who urges us to see religion as a perpetual effort to take up a humble, unselfish vision of the world as a whole; an embarrassingly caricatured slave, who loves his God and asks no questions; and Socrates and Plato, who have the same views as before. Alcibiades puts in a

brief appearance, speaking rather like a decadent Christ Church undergraduate, imagined by the *Daily Mirror*. He addresses Socrates as "Pisskins". Plato threatens to kill him. Socrates objects: "You can't kill ideas, you must learn to think."

These dialogues, sadly, have not learned. They do not know what Murdoch knows about the power of thought contained in the literary imagination; and they do not go far as argument. The trouble begins with their Greekness. Plato's characters were his near contemporaries; their speech, their political concerns, their ideas, all would have had a lively immediacy for his audience. And because the semi-fictional world he creates is realized with marvellous consistency and thoroughness of vision, they can, in a different way, be near to us as well. Murdoch's Greek world is imagined half-heartedly. It is neither Greek nor contemporary, nor any interesting combination of the two. Many aspects of this world can be understood only as ancient. Indeed, to follow the dialogues one needs a reasonable knowledge of Greek history—and of Plato, since there are many casual, cryptic allusions to his arguments. But a reader who has thought about the Theory of Forms, or the image of the cave, or the other less famous material Murdoch mines, will feel that little has been done to illuminate the ideas. On the other hand, there is much here that can have no connection with Greece or Plato: for example, casual reference to pornography; to current controversies over pornography; to arguments about the aesthetic status of *objets trouvés*. All this convinces us that we are, after all, in a twentieth-century world. Yet little is done to explore these contemporary issues either. We come away feeling that the intellectual fun of these pieces is bought cheaply, as a series of in-jokes. How cute that a Greek boy should know G. E. Moore's reply to scepticism. How amusing that Socrates should invent (as R. M. Hare, after all, once said he did) Hare's prescriptive analysis of evaluative discourse.

The trouble is graver still when we consider that the central notions in these two pieces were understood by the Greeks in a way very different from ours. Murdoch's characters, like us but unlike the Greeks, speak of "art" and "the arts"; they puzzle over the definition of art. Yet at the same time they cite Greek examples and seem to believe that dramatic performance is a part of civic religion—an idea foreign to us. Whose eunuch is being investigated here? Again, religion is discussed using Greek examples and some Greek concepts. But the characters assume that religion is a matter of believing in something and of having certain sorts of inner personal experiences, involving, perhaps, a "personal god". They easily refer to the entirely non-Greek virtue of humility. (They even debate the modernization of the language of traditional liturgy—here cuteness overwhelms us.) Murdoch's sensibility is so resolutely Christian, albeit agnostic, that she has no curiosity and no love for the Greeks themselves. Her own personal vision, ironically, prevents her from seeing them.

None of this would be fatal if the arguments were powerful enough. They are not. There are too many characters, conversing too half-heartedly. The ideas that emerge have been better argued in *The Sovereignty of Good*, and even in the lesser *The Fire and the Sun*. What is more, they have been better worked out, in a truly Platonic spirit, in the best of Murdoch's novels, such as *The Bell* and *The Black Prince*. In those fully imagined works we do see her philosophical ideas about religion, art, morality and desire unfolding through the lives and conversations of men and women for whom these ideas have the importance of life itself. When we read *The Bell's* contrasting speeches about morality, we know out of what troubled histories these thoughts emerge, and how they inform, in turn, those histories. And in working through the thoughts we are ourselves made intellectually and emotionally attentive. Our concern for the characters and their world makes us attempt a clearer vision of our own.

That is how a literary work can be a Platonic dialogue. "Art and Eros" and "Above the Gods", despite the philosophical value of their basic conceptions, are not Platonic dialogues. Their failure of thought is a failure of imagination.

Arranging for Utopia

Trevor J. Saunders

GEORGE KLOSKO
The Development of Plato's Political Theory
263pp. Methuen. £15 (paperback, £6.95).
0 161 38660 1

Plato is outrageous, and knew it. His political position is calculated to raise the blood-pressure of every pragmatist and every liberal. He held that to political problems there are right answers and there are wrong answers. The right answers are certain: they are the fruit of the advanced knowledge, to be won by an intellectual elite, of the structure of reality, and in particular of human nature and the essence of moral values. Therefore, as he puts it in the *Republic*, let philosophers become kings, or kings philosophers.

Fanciful utopianism, you may think. Not a bit of it. Plato is utterly serious; and he makes it quite clear that once the right answers are known, he is not prepared to tolerate the wrong ones. Urgent persuasion, pressure and even force will be justified in the interests of conformity; and moral training of an appropriate kind, brooking no rival, will assume a central political role.

So George Klosko has good reason to start *The Development of Plato's Political Theory* by examining Plato's views on moral psychology. He takes them to be a reaction against the purely intellectualist account given by Socrates. No man, held Socrates with unrelenting simplicity, does what he thinks is bad for him in preference to what he thinks is good; every moral decision must be the result of some process of calculation. Hence his belief in what Klosko calls "moral autonomy". Each person must seek the objectively good, master it intellectually, and then apply it in his own case; for Socrates, and an elaboration and deepening of his fundamental insight.

But the main drawback of Klosko's pre-
sented view, which is ignorance, leads to

misery. Klosko argues that this theory "substitutes logic for psychology", and that it leaves unexplained "the phenomenon of psychological conflict" ("video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor", in Ovid's words). Plato, therefore, dissatisfied with the Socratic intellectualism, worked out a new psychology, which recognized the role of emotions and appetites in decision-making, and treated them as distinct from and often in conflict with reason, but ideally controlled by it and subserving it.

The political importance of such an analysis is incalculable. It is all too easy to observe the actions of our fellow men and conclude that few have souls under the control of reason; that those few ought by dint of superior moral knowledge to rule the rest; and that the management of the passions and appetites of the ruled is a prime concern of politics. A persuasive psychology meshes with an authoritarian political programme.

So far so lengthy: on moral psychology Klosko goes into surprising detail. But there are turbulent waters here, both of philosophy and of history, and at times Klosko's canoe looks in danger of capsizing. If Socrates really was an out-and-out intellectualist who paid "almost no attention... to the need to control desire", why did he take pains to school his own appetites so very thoroughly? Presumably because he thought of them as importing poor judgments, which compete with better ones; and such "psychological conflict" he would naturally have supposed to impede the attainment of higher moral knowledge. Once achieved, however, that knowledge is rock-firm, and shows infallibly what is morally best: it cannot be shaken by the fallacies suggested by unruly appetites. Plato's theory of the divided soul conveys essentially the same point. If this story is right, then the "development" in his history is not a disagreement with Socrates, but an elaboration and deepening of his fundamental insight.

But the main drawback of Klosko's pre-
sented view, which is ignorance, leads to

occupation with psychology and moral training is that it detracts from the function of the book as an account of Plato's politics. By the time he has supplied summaries of Plato's changing views on metaphysics, epistemology and divers other topics, and indicated their connections with politics, the total of prolegomena has grown out of proportion to the space devoted to the ostensible subject of the book. To be sure, to understand anything in Plato one has to understand everything, so intricately integrated is his thought. One can see Klosko's difficulties: they face every writer on Plato. So let us applaud his attempt at synthesis, but recognize that he gives us neither a balanced description of Plato's thought as a whole, nor a complete discussion of all aspects of his psychology, nor the specialized treatment of his purely political ideas which is so badly needed. As he frankly admits, his book is only a "partial" remedy for the lack of an up-to-date account to replace Ernest Barker's *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his predecessors*, a grand book in its own way, but now nearly seventy years old.

Within his self-imposed limits, Klosko handles political and constitutional questions skilfully enough. He mixes résumé and explanation in sensible proportions, and his assessments are judicious and well-informed. But the limits are severe. How can he hope to do justice to the *Laws*, Plato's last and most political work, which is even longer than the *Republic*, in forty-four pages? He omits or skims over good deal: for instance, the carefully contrived arrangements for getting the *Laws* of Timon under way, the apparent recognition of the need for the authorities to undertake sociological research, the advanced non-vindictive penology designed to "cure" the criminal, and various important and salutary innovations in legal procedure.

Taken in isolation, many of Plato's measures in the *Laws* are in fact perfectly palatable to liberal sentiment. He admits to having

abandoned hope of finding men who are virtuous enough to be entrusted with the absolute power he conferred on the Guardians in the *Republic*, and even makes certain concessions to democracy. So may a sadder and a wiser Plato be greeted as a recruit, albeit reluctant, to the camp of pragmatic and piecemeal social engineers? In a sense, yes; for an authoritarian at bay and forced to compromise is a pragmatist of a kind. But in the *Laws* Plato continues to maintain a strong authoritarian thrust, and exhibits a constant tension between what he would like to achieve or impose, and what he thinks he has to concede or even encourage in the interests of getting anything done at all. This tension, which is at the plumb centre of his political thought, is indeed noticed in Klosko's work, but does not receive the comprehensive and detailed analysis that would be so revealing.

Karl Popper, in *The Open Society and its Enemies*, trounced utopianism, and especially Plato's, with passion. He made one realize why Plato matters. Klosko naturally discusses this issue, though again with the unfortunate brevity dictated by the curious economy of his book. I think he will leave his readers unengaged, without that mixture of excitement and alarm which they ought to feel on encountering the world's first and most radical professor of politics.

The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences (215pp. Cambridge University Press. £17.50; paperback, £5.95. 0 521 26692 0) is a collection of new essays, each of which focuses on individual thinkers—Gadamer, Derrida, Foucault, Kuhn, Rawls, Habermas, Althusser, Lévi-Strauss and the *Annales* historians—who have been influential in bringing

away from positivist ideals of the explanation of human behaviour towards a more hermeneutic approach to the search for "a systematic theory of the nature of man and society". The editor, Quentin Skinner, provides an introduction.

Losing and lacking

Elizabeth Wright

ELLIE RAGLAND-SULLIVAN
Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of
Psychoanalysis
358pp. Croom Helm. £25.
0 7099 4205 2
BICE BENVENUTO and ROGER KENNEDY
The Works of Jacques Lacan
237pp. Free Association Books. £20
(paperback, £7.95).
0 94660 208

The two books under review profess to clarify and synthesize the thought of Jacques Lacan, a bold undertaking, since it must necessarily go contrary to the spirit and letter of his teaching. Ellie Ragland-Sullivan launches, without reservations into what Lacan called "the Discourse of the University", in which the hidden purveyors of "power-knowledge" exclude the subjectivity of the learner/reader from the "objective" drive for knowledge. She has written a scholarly and intellectually ambitious book which makes no pretence at modesty ("Hegel missed the obvious truth": "What I find particularly disturbing in Frigary's analysis is her resistance to getting Lacan 'right'"). For her, mistakes are not symptomatic, but simply, wrong interpretations of the master's knowledge. Lacan is not read as or by a "split" subject, but as and by the subject who is "presumed to know" (Lacan's term for the analyst's idealized view of the analyst). In the process of her authoritative reading Lacan is transformed from writer into author.

Yet it is precisely because Ragland-Sullivan takes this approach that her book is something of a landmark in Lacanian studies. Whereas previous studies have mediated Lacan's doctrine from within his own terminology of idiom; this study demonstrates its relevance to continuing debates in philosophy, such as the relation of body to mind, perception to reality, language to reference, self to society, and all of which it relates to the question of the unconscious.

Ragland-Sullivan shows that, in confronting the question of the genesis of the subject and the projective nature of the object, Lacan

raises epistemological as well as psychological questions which go well beyond the charge of "naïve mentalism" that Ernest Gellner has made against Freud. His tripartite scheme—the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real—which structures the developing subject from infancy, has been formulated so as to take into account the fact that material nature is the ground from which subject and object emerge. Lacan's Real points to material effects that cannot be represented within the formal categories of language; it is a concept by which he separates out a particular portion of nature (the body) from the *matéria prima*, the ground of the brute division of one body from another. The separation from the mother's body thus produces a Real effect in the form of a continuing trauma of loss that will resonate throughout life and in language, unsettling stable notions of identity and gender. Since the public word of the Symbolic Order can never match the private Real experience, these unconscious disruptions are a challenge to any unifying system, including philosophical ones.

It is a merit of this book that it raises and attempts to deal with such issues, and Ragland-Sullivan continually surprises by the brilliance with which she has grasped the detail of Lacan's doctrine. Yet at the level of overall organization, the book leaves much to be desired. She has tried to present Lacan's work as a continuum of evolving concepts, whereby the same concepts come up again and again in different contexts. Although she covers the main aspects of Lacan's theory, the issues she discusses give an impression of *bricolage*, as if collected over the years. A confusing system of cross-reference runs back and forth to other critics and researchers, working as a kind of highly conscious free association. Ragland-Sullivan also seems to think, probably in view of recent criticisms of psychoanalysis, that she must continually bring in empirical research in support of Lacan's findings "to forestall a pragmatically-oriented reader who would reject out of hand Lacan's theoretical-philosophical methods of inquiry for lack of familiar inductive 'proof'". But the pragmatically minded reader is more likely to be put off than won over. What is generally the case is that there is only a tenuous connection between the point she is discussing and the material she

brings in as support. For instance, the fact that neonates have keen and imitative perceptual abilities can hardly be taken as "vindication" of Lacan's theory that the beginnings of identity are founded in a composite of images, sounds and other sensory responses that merge the internal with the external. This is no more than circumstantial evidence which could equally well be encompassed within other theories, even a Skinnerian one. It is in any case premature to claim that empirical findings at the level we now have them can bear out the theory.

On the other hand, Ragland-Sullivan dismisses somewhat cursorily those theorists who have reread Freud and Lacan in more radical ways (Julia Kristeva, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari) and orient them towards social hope rather than dour scepticism. In her final chapter, however, she wants to show that the insertion of the subject into the law of language does not mean that it cannot struggle for freedom in a particular society and that Lacan's thought can give us "the basis of a new theory on which to continue the re-writing of woman's and man's history".

Here is an interesting and courageous book, which will itself provoke further controversy because of its uncompromising championing of Lacan.

By contrast *The Works of Jacques Lacan* appears somewhat cautious and circumspect, as if anxious to promote Lacan without giving offence to anyone. Bice Benvenuto and Roger Kennady are not entirely in agreement about their evaluation of Lacan's contribution, but it is a pity that their objections are levelled against his autocratic stance in both theory and practice rather than channelled into serious engagements with his theory.

Unlike Ragland-Sullivan, Benvenuto and Kennady have undertaken to present Lacan's thought in linear form, beginning with his work on paranoid psychoses in 1932 and ending with his seminar on feminine sexuality. *Encore*, in the early 1970s. The chapters in between deal chronologically with major aspects of his work and usefully map out his departure from both Kleinian and orthodox Freudian theory. One of the best chapters, "The Oedipus Complex", clarifies the distinction between an object-relations theory (Klein) which focuses on a

Resisting the Renaissance

Patrick Collinson

JOHN MORGAN
Gadfly Learning: Puritan attitudes towards reason, learning, and education, 1500-1640
360pp. Cambridge University Press. £35.
0521235111
A. L. ROWSE
Reflections on the Puritan Revolution
262pp. Methuen. £14.95.
0413408809

At Putney, in 1647, the question was put: "What is the reason that we find the light and glory of God eclipsed from our eyes this day?" Answer: before true enlightenment could take place a source of darkness must first be extinguished. This was the light or "candle" of human reason. This paradox lies at the heart of John Morgan's study of English puritan attitudes to reason, learning and education between the Elizabethan Settlement and the Civil War. Protestantism was not inherently unreasonable. Although he is usually misquoted, what Luther apparently said in Worms was that he would not budge unless he was proved wrong by both Scripture and reason; and within the orthodox Protestant tradition of which English Puritanism was a part the true understanding of Scripture in itself depended not upon extraordinary and irrational inspiration but upon man's reasonable faculties, exercised in sound philology and laborious exegesis. Yet these skills in themselves had no power to save. If anything the reverse. In Kent in 1550 the lay gossip Henry Hurt pronounced that all errors had their origin among learned men. And in Germany Thomas Muntzer said that you could swallow 100,000 Bibles and still know nothing about God.

Yet sixteenth-century Protestants and Puritans were more insistent than any other movement in Christian history on their Church having a learned as well as a godly ministry, capable of instructing its people. John Foxe reported that by 1550 the Suffolk clothing town of Hadleigh was more like a university than a centre of industry, so ripe was the scriptural knowledge of its inhabitants. At one level the riddle is so readily soluble that Dr Morgan may be thought to make rather a meal of it. Knowledge of languages and texts was a necessary skill in order to comprehend and communicate the biblical scheme of salvation. Protestant learning was profound but confining, a mere technique. Puritans in the pulpit practised the virtue of art concealing art. Their learning, which was preparative to practical and pastoral skills, must not be paraded.

But in fact the paradox was part of a more extensive contradiction, the sense of which Morgan shares with another scholar of his own name, Professor Edmund S. Morgan, and never better stated than in the latter's little classic, *The Puritan Family* (1944). Puritans disparaged the merely evil virtues equivalent to good behaviour and induced by education as irrelevant to the only thing of ultimate importance: election to eternal life. Yet no organized human group has ever been more insistent on good order and "civility". The key to the problem evidently lies in what Perry Miller called the "marrow" of Puritan divinity, the "practical syllogism" which, within the terms of the divine covenant, derived precious assurance from apparent virtue which was not in itself salvific. Hence the Puritan insistence on the formation of character and on the formative institutions of home, congregation, school and university.

By reminding us that the role of reason was as secondary as that of all human works, Morgan has provided a valuable corrective to Perry Miller's emphasis on the puritan "mind" as a significant source of modern rationality. He also differs from those students of Puritanism who see it as more or less continuous with the programme of Renaissance humanism; rather the Puritans conducted a "Counter-Renaissance". Puritanism was not, as Miller almost suggested, a product of the radical logical method of Peter Ramus. That would be to make it altogether too ratiocinative. The native and essentially religious pragmatism of the Puritans did, however, find Ramism serviceable. "The great difficulty is to comprehend the religious fervency of the puritans which was the cure of their being." Difficult, that

is, for a post-religious age. Yet a post-rational age enjoys certain advantages in exercising a more truly historical appreciation of Puritan experience, for as Quentin Skinner would insist, the Puritans of the seventeenth century are not to be blamed for their failure to develop a "modern mind".

This is how Morgan's book begins, with ideas both fertile and elegantly expressed. Subsequently it falters in a series of chapters on organized aspects of the learning process (ministry, household, school, schoolmasters, university) which as information duplicate what has recently been written by others on these very institutions. The trouble seems to arise from categories and especially from the category of "Puritan". Morgan suggests that "Puritan" represents "existence" rather than "essence", and he scrupulously avoids speaking substantively and identically of "Puritanism". He knows that "Puritan" was an authentic specimen of the species Protestant, a difference of hue, not in itself a primary colour. And he admits that it must be a question whether puritan attitudes to learning and education in fact constituted a distinct approach.

But these cautious things having been said, caution is thrown to the winds. Morgan proceeds with his exploration of attitudes by quoting what are represented as the puritan opinions of known Puritans. Meanwhile, the true rather than spurious classification of much of this discourse is obscured. It was not only John Stockwood of Tonbridge who uttered the commonplace that the preacher should not turn the pulpit into a philosopher's chair but (probably) a hundred other authors, not all of them Puritans and some writing long before the sixteenth century. Only the gratuitous freedom with which "puritan" is deployed adjectivally suggests a persistent unease on Morgan's part. If it is self-evident that John Brinsley, a Puritan of puritan Christ's College, taught with puritan fervency at puritan Ashby de la Zouch, why rub it in so remorselessly?

Since it is not always significant that such "Puritans" were Puritans, their attitudes towards learning as a process and an institution were not necessarily distinctive, aside from their reservations about the ultimate value of human reason. Writing on the universities, Morgan finds little that was peculiar, apart from a technical objection to the degree of DD and a plan to involve scholars in regular Bible study, which was to adapt the university for the

Anglican accommodations

John Drury

GERARD REEDY, SJ
The Bible and Reason: Anglican and Scripture in late seventeenth-century England
184pp. Academic and University Publishers. £20.
0812279751

"Not brilliant and perhaps not elegant, but not ignorant". Gerard Reedy's praise of the late seventeenth-century Anglican divines, in *The Bible and Reason*, is faint but just. Robert South, Bishop of Oxford, preaching on the fourteenth anniversary of the execution of Charles I, announced complacently, "I pretend not to . . . illuminations. I am neither Prophet, nor Propheetic Prelate." In the context of the occasion the disclaimer was reassuring. South was not going to lift the lid of the Pandora's box of apocalyptic typology and bring back the drums and fury of former – and all too recent – years. He went on to designate the method of his scriptural exegesis as "accommodation", not "design". In other words, his way with the biblical record was first to see it in its own realistic historical setting, then accommodate it to the needs of the present. This is still a familiar pulpit trope, steady rather than inspiring in effect, and depending on the firmness of the theological centre in the public mind. The same God was in charge of both the historic moments to which the preacher referred, past and present. A sober man could see the restoration of Charles II as "the most prodigious act of Providence" (Hyde) since the exodus of Israel from Egypt. But in line with a general Anglican distaste for arguments pushed too far, South was reticent about the detail of providential plans and operations. To go into all that, to seek "design" rather than to accommodate, would be to desert the plain and literal wisdom of historical darkness.

Two of the little scenes with which Reedy enlivens his book contrast the rival methods. On June 26, 1650, Cromwell, confided in by Edward Ludlow "that he was now accomplishing what was prophesied in the 110th Psalm". There was nothing general or vague about it. The exposition took an hour over the



A depiction of Adam and Eve, of the Westminister Assembly of Divines (1643), reproduced from Religion in the Popular Prints (1600-1832) by John Miller (1722pp. Chadwyck-Healey. £40. 0859641708).

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seven verses. It was hot and uncannily precise, revealing the present actualization of God's ancient design in minute verbal detail from the Geneva Bible (the King James version would not have worked as well). At the same time, Edward Hyde in exile on Jersey was beginning work on his *Contemplations and Reflections on the Psalms of David, Applying those Devotions to the Troubles of the Times*. The coolness of contemplating and reflecting marks the difference from Cromwell. Hyde accommodated. He considered ancient Jewish history, "those very occasions, and the particular state that David was then in". Then he showed it to be "applicable to the several conditions of our life, which we may fall into, whether we are in Joy or Sorrow, in any Perplexity or Distress, or under any of God's Dispensations". Literal interpretation produced moral order and comfort.

Both of them believed that what happened was of divine dispensation. But Cromwell was ultra-theological about it and Hyde infra-theological. The lurid glamour of particular divine favour illuminated Cromwell as exegete. Hyde based himself in a more general and diverse humanity. With him, so long as there is joy or sorrow, perplexity or distress, the text has meaning. Such interpretation can survive even atheism.

We can see now that both kinds of exegesis are apt to the Bible, but to different books and traditions within it. Cromwell's fits Daniel and the apocalyptic strand. Hyde's fits the Joseph saga, or I and II Samuel, and the earlier historical tradition. They did not notice that the canon was for them, as for the divines, unified and univocal. Critical knives were already cutting into its unity, which was threatened by the work of Richard Simon in France and John Toland and Anthony Colles in England. The divines knew about it and resisted it. But by taking up Hyde's accommodating interpretations as against Cromwell's "design", they backed the winner. The elaborate typologies of "design" were tightly woven into the sense of canon, accommodation less so. Every blow struck at the canon upset the typology.

Besides, the divines were public men in a world where typology was on the way out, plainness and human science on the way in. The Bible was to serve public order. It was to magnify God and to comfort man (Sullivan).

purpose of a seminary. As for the schoolmaster, "puritan ministers, writers, schoolmasters have left no evidence that they planned a wholly new approach to knowledge". Historians who have advocated the term "puritan" as unhelpful have not heard, and indeed their advice was probably too drastic. But a difference of religious degree, or temperament, was not the basis of a separate philosophy or programme, even if it implied a special kind of "existence", books which deal with the puritan attitude to this and that continue to distort our perception of post-Reformation England. This has been said before and it seems that we shall have to say it again.

A. L. Rowse believes that what has not been said before, because it has somehow not been noticed, is that the Puritan Revolution was iconoclastic and did not certain amount of material damage, so that nothing was ever the same again. Cathedrals were knocked about and lucky to survive at all. Castle palaces were slighted and levelled, their places, pictures dispersed, talent blasted away men cut off in their prime. And to the end? Revolutions do more harm than good. Why have we never known this? "Few historians have much visual sense." Rather (mostly Christopher Hill) are beset by "the various brands of nonsense pag thought" – "dark people". Millenarians, Quakers, Levellers and Diggers were the "new" revolution. "For of what value is the thought of people who can hardly think?" Just so. Rowse himself remarks, there are a goodly number of redundant books on the subject of Puritans but none more so than this incoherently indulgent and thoroughly bilious effusion.

lingfleet), the man it was most to depress the bumptious *illuminatus* with his typological shopping list.

In all that I have said so far the divines have figured less vividly than Cromwell and Hyde the Lord's anointed and the exile in Jewish privacy. That is a fair reflection of the state of affairs which Reedy describes. The accommodations of the divines were burdensome makeshift, but useful. They were true to the present Anglican bishops and their more makeshift efforts to steady a boat. That is now, it was a task requiring learning ("I ignorant") and political tact, with little promise that their careful *bricolage* would combine anything new or luminous to religion or laws. Yet Locke admired their ethical acumen, and for several generations country parsons would reach down a volume of Tillotson's sermons on Saturday afternoons.

The really important work was done by secluded men. Reedy makes a lot of Richard Simon as one such. He was amazing. "None in 1682 [when Simon's *Histoire Critique* appeared in English translation and found its way into episcopal libraries] could in fact do with Simon." His fissiparous treatment of the Pentateuch was precisely the sort of break-up of order which ecclesiastical did not want. Yet beyond their eighteenth-century future was Simon's nineteenth-century future was Simon. Reedy is right to bring him in powerfully to reveal the temporary nature of Anglican accommodations. As a Jesuit, Father Simon relishes that, and wastes no time on Babel's attempts to bomb Simon out of existence. The same token, though, he fails to give fair showings to two momentous non-Anglican figures comparable with Simon. Of Louis friend Le Clerc, a Protestant, there is not enough. Spinoza, the unbaptized Jew, who communicates, is not patiently understood. Ranking him with Hobbes as an "apocryphal" obedience shows a failure to distinguish between outward submission to the angel Leviathan and the inward love and knowledge of the Spinozist's lover God. This is a far cry from the usual scrupulous fairness of a valuable and graceful essay, and a sign that his still vital enough to push his historical taking sides. Spinoza too had a seventeenth-century future, with George and Matthew Arnold among his admirers.

Advertisements for himself

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369pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £16.
0297788582

"There is no more remarkable psychological element in history than the way in which a period can become suddenly unintelligible", wrote the much-admired and bang-up-to-date young G. K. Chesterton, attempting in 1904 to resuscitate that darling of his grandparents' generation, G. F. Watts. "The thing always happens sharply: a whisper runs through the salons, Mr Max Beerbohm waves a wand and a whole generation of great men and great achievements suddenly looks mildewed and unmeaning." Figures like Watts and Chesterton, whose reputations ballooned across the sky for their contemporaries, are particularly baffling to a posterity confronted with the collapsed and mildewed remnants. Chesterton's efforts to raise the dust on Watts's behalf were characteristically strenuous, and it is clearly high time, half a century after his death, for a Chestertonian spring-cleaning.

Revered as a sage and prophet in his lifetime, Chesterton has not had much luck with his forecasts so far. He was against socialism, feminism and the theory of evolution. He was a rabid antisemite (long before Hitler, Chesterton suggested that Jews should be tolerated on condition they acknowledged their Jewishness by wearing special clothes). He did not hold with industrialization, and he ridiculed the notion that social conditions affect people. He was equally contemptuous of education for girls, holding that woman's place was in the home, cleaning, cooking and clearing up after her political superiors ("All sane men are fond of children, but if they have to look after them for long they would be bored, just as women would be bored if they sat in a stuffy hall talking for hours about Tariff Reform"). He was a staunch admirer of Mussolini. Above all he believed in the Roman Catholic Church and votes for men.

A man ought to vote with his head and heart, his soul and stomach, his eye for faces and his ear for music . . . If he has ever seen a fine sunset, the crimson colour of it should creep into his vote. If he has ever heard splendid songs, they should be in his ears as he makes the mystic cross.

No wonder a man needs a lot of looking

Crucial bruising

Anne Duchêne

JULIETTE HUXLEY
Leaves of the Tulip Tree
248pp. John Murray. £12.95.
071954288X

The widow of Julian Huxley, composing this book – very slowly, she says – during her eighties, chose to set it under the emblem, if not of mutilation, then at least of incompleteness. Her title comes from a legend about the eviction from the Garden of Eden, where Eve under the pursuing angels' sword gathers many flowers and branches as she can, but only snatches the end of the tulip tree's leaf, so that "the veins still branch towards the missing tip". "I have always loved the tulip tree and I have tried in this book to search for the tips of the leaves."

Born in 1896, Juliette Baillot was a very pretty French Swiss girl from Nauchet who was governess at Garsington to Lady Ottoline Morell's daughter for about two years, until, in 1919, she married Julian Huxley – or perhaps more accurately was married by him, "spelled under the flood of his words like a rabbit bewitched by a spell". She was twenty-three, he was thirty-one. Thereafter she shared his life: in Oxford and London, on African tramps, in post-war Paris with Unesco – until he died in 1973.

Her memoirs therefore add some small berries to the vast bush of Bloomsburyana which seems a staple crop of British publishing. Her devotion to Lady Ottoline, "the most wonderful person I have ever known", remains

after, if he cannot even vote without a red mist before his eyes and singing in his ears. Chesterton required more than most. As a schoolboy at St Paul's, he drove his teachers to distraction. "Too much for me", wrote his form master in 1887, when Gilbert was thirteen; "means well by me, I believe, but has an inconceivable knack of forgetting at the shortest notice . . .". Eight years later Chesterton's father wrote him out a set of travelling instructions more suitable, as his biographer points out, to a small boy about to cross London for the first time than to a young man in his twenties. Love letters to and from his future wife harp constantly on the need to keep himself clean, get his hair cut, clothes mended, buttons sewn on. In a letter written a few days after the sudden, devastating death of his fiancée's favourite sister, Chesterton was still boasting about his grubbiness ("Fear not, I shall wash myself") in terms that make it perfectly plain that he had no intention whatsoever of allowing her to depend on him.

This understanding was the basis of their marriage. His childlike impotence (nny attempt at adult sexual relations was apparently abandoned, by mutual consent, after the wedding night) suited them both. "My dear, I couldn't earn our daily bread if I had to study timetables", he said complacently, when his wife questioned his notorious inability to catch a train. In the end, she reduced him to such infantile subjugation that he could barely function without her. Solicitors sent her legal documents marked with a cross, where Chesterton was to sign his name, and taxi-drivers were invited to help themselves out of his pockets. In later life he grew so fat he couldn't dress himself, tie his shoe laces or take a bath without a maid posted outside the door to mop up the mess. Stories of his famous unreliability, helplessness and forgetfulness were part of his endearing legend: it was as though he had become the public's baby as well as his wife's. "I like getting into hot water," he said archly, "it helps to keep me clean."

Martin Luther – a man he abominated – was, in Chesterton's view, the first person to go in for this sort of wholesale self-advertisement. "He was the first man who ever consciously used his consciousness; or what was later called his personality . . . he did in a very real sense make the modern world. He destroyed Reason; and substituted Suggestion." The same might, of course, be said of Chesterton

himself. He loved reason but shied away from any kind of intellectual rigour or concentration. His critical insight was sharp, his field comprehensive, his vigour invincible. T. S. Eliot found his book on Dickens a delight. Theologians said his *Thomas Aquinas* was the best thing on the subject. His journalism exerted a magnetic pull far greater than any single columnist, or even chat-show host, could hope for today. But he had the journalist's occupational disease of letting himself – and his admirers – off too lightly. "Taking trouble has never been a weakness of mine", he said, when reproached about his carelessness and laziness, his elementary mistakes over facts and dates. The cult of personality was the one thing he took pains about. He worked at it with industry and perseverance. Michael Finch has found a whole notebook Chesterton kept for practising his signature; and it was the exuberant, elephantine flourishes of his personality that, morally as well as literally speaking, overwhelmed him in the end. Audiences flocked to see him not so much for what he wrote or said as for how he did it. His *Short History of England* was dismissed in the TLS in 1917 on all counts, save "as an expression of Mr Chesterton's mentality". "As a lecture, it was a fiasco", reported the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* after a visit from this one-man circus, "but as an exhibition of Chesterton it was pleasing."

Chesterton quite deliberately made an exhibition of himself: it was his life's work, and he paid for it, though the cost is hardly hinted at in this fond, loyal and – for such an enquiring subject – surprisingly incurious biography. Finch is interested in facts and dates but not in the fretfulness, frustration and mysterious ailments which dogged Mrs Chesterton's private life. Nor is he concerned with the increasing rapidly, mechanical repetitiveness and vanity of Chesterton's own writings, for which both had sacrificed so much. "This is what we now call Personality", wrote Chesterton, describing a particularly tiresome piece of showing-off on Luther's part: "After that it was called Advertisement or Salesmanship." Passages like this suggest that Chesterton understood his own Lutheran tendencies only too well, and was helpless to resist them. His sales patter got out of hand, as when, for instance, he argued that in nearly 2,000 years since the Church was founded, Christendom has been getting steadily better – "more lucid; more level-headed; more reasonable in its hopes, more healthy in

one had to believe that he was right – it took me years to discover it might not be so." (The note of about if slow Swiss independence reminds one that this wife and mother of biologists elsewhere eloquently argues her own belief that evolutionary theory fails to explain the variety of creation.)

In the initial shock, when "maggots in the brain" threatened her own health and sanity, kind friends sent her on a therapeutic trip to Baghdad. Lady Ottoline chose her a red dress, "the colour of life and hope". Wells wrote kindly bracing notes, and on return she dutifully, urged by her husband, took lovers – the first staid but supportive, the second (drowned in the war) more liberating, so that she found her "own growing-point" again and could reaffirm belief in life. She also found in herself a taste and talent for sculpting. She marries no more lovers, and there were still several decades of restored married life through which to carry the scar.

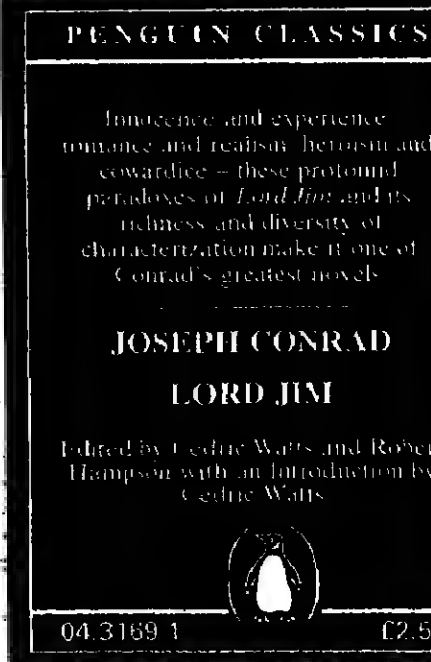
It can all be lucidly and very loyally assessed now, of course: her own immaturity and insufficiencies, her husband's rationality and meanness compounded by the peculiar fate of being an elder son among Huxleys and Arnolds. It seems just, though, to say that the whole book is written round this crucial bruising. The damaged leaf grew green and looked glossy, but the tip was gone. The more poignant, therefore, to note Julian's acknowledgement of the matter in his own two-volume memoirs. A grisly trip to Dar-es-Salaam, he noted in mid-paragraph, was remarkable, among other things, for "the presence of a very attractive American girl, with whom I fear I flirted (she took it much more seriously than I did)".



A drawing by Chesterton reproduced from The Art of G. K. Chesterton by Alzina Stone Dale (114pp. Loyola University Press, distributed in the UK by Alden Mackey, 15 Shaftesbury Avenue, Bedford MK40 3SA. £20. 082940516X).

its instincts, more humorous and cheerful. . . . – thanks to Christian common sense: "and nowhere in this sad world are boys happier in apple-trees or men in more equal chorus singing as they tread the wine, than under the fixed flash of this instant and intolerant enlightenment . . .". If this means anything, it seems to be that Catholic boys are happier stealing apples, and Catholic men make better singers, than non-believers.

One of Chesterton's closest friends said he died of a broken heart. Perhaps he did. Perhaps he knew that the forgetfulness he had cultivated so assiduously since boyhood had finally caught up with him. It seems to have been a family failing. When Chesterton's only sister died at the age of eight, their father turned her portrait to the wall, forbade his wife to mention her name and insisted that the whole family forget she had ever existed. This remained Chesterton's lovable strategy for coping with things he found difficult to face. By the end of his life he was not simply forgetting to catch trains, fasten his buttons, or carry on with the rest of the trivial business of living, which he kept a wife to do for him. He had forgotten what he wanted to say, and, like a great many celebrated old journalists, he had grown so used to the familiar, reassuring booming of his own voice that he had long since forgotten to attach any meaning to the words it used.



Making for the fringe

Ahdaf Soueif

LAILA ABOU SAIF
A Bridge Through Time: A memoir
282pp. Quartet, £9.95.
070432587 X
EATIL L. SUILIVAN
Women in Egyptian Public Life
223pp. Syracuse University Press, 1600
Jamesville Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13210.
\$29.95.
081562354 2

Laila Abou Saif's *A Bridge Through Time* spans a period of almost twenty-five years: from her betrothal in Cairo in 1958 to her departure for America and a teaching job in the University of New Haven a couple of years ago. There are many faults to be found in these memoirs. At the most basic level, almost every Arabic word that occurs is inaccurate. To take the most flagrant examples: the word which President Abd el-Nasser used to describe the defeat of 1967 – and which came to identify the entire era from 1967 to 1973 – was *naksa* not *nakba*. The word used by Anwar Sadat when he wanted to allow a degree of diversity of political opinion but was reluctant to condone any *ushab* (parties) was *munabir* (forums) not *unawbir*. The oft-heard Islamic cry is *Allahu-Akbar* not *Akhar*. The *karawan* (not *qawran*), which still sings in some parts of Cairo, is the curlew not the nightingale, and so on. These mistakes embody one of the reasons why Ms Abou Saif found it so difficult to get up in Egypt: (immigrant, divorced and American-educated at a time when none of these things was

common, she was also demanding to be taken seriously as the first Egyptian woman stage director – and she was making this demand in flawed Arabic.

This verbal inaccuracy is mirrored by a factual one: the *mugama* is not an "octagonal building of about nine floors" but a rectangular eleven-storeyed one. An apartment in Zamulck would not overlook a "tributary of the Nile" but the Nile itself. "My country, my country" is not merely "a patriotic song" but the Egyptian National Anthem. The 1952 turning of Cairo was more or less established as the doing of Mir al-Futah (a neo-fascist society) and not the Muslim Brotherhood. High-fliers pre-1966 did not go to the Sieration Hotel (which had not yet been built) but to the Scrimmis "Night and Day". The list could go on. One would have thought that Quartet, part of the Namara Group, would be equipped with an editor who can pick up this sort of thing – but apparently not.

In its straightforward bits, *A Bridge Through Time* is very readable. But then suddenly it appears that a need is felt for some "style" – and that's when things go wrong: here is Ms Alina Saif observing the felucca boatmen on the Nile: "These boatmen's lives had not changed for thousands of years. Yet I found a strange comfort in observing the life of my ancestors reassert itself with primeval confidence, the still point of Egypt." And here she is entering a seminar room: "I found an esoteric group of Arab and Western scholars . . . engrossed in learned talk."

Since the book is dedicated to Gloria (Steinem), and since Laila Abou Saif was obviously impressed by the "statuesque

women of marble and bronze resilience" she met in New York City, it is not surprising to come across some feminist jargon: "I loathed this biological self which men invaded with their penises and their surgical instruments."

But the author has not suffered unduly at the hands of men. She was fortunate in having a liberal, supportive and distinguished father (her love for him and for her dead sister, Asma, is one of the more endearing human qualities in the book), and even though her marriage was arranged – as was the custom – at an early age, her husband appears to have been a gentleman absolutely *comme il faut*; he accompanied her on study trips to the United States, never stood in her way, went with her to abort the child he so badly wanted, and, finally, gave her that almost unheard-of thing: a Coptic divorce. The one thing he could not do was inspire her with passion and Laila, unlike most women in Egypt, chose to terminate her pregnancy, abandon the marriage and set up on her own to pursue her theatre career. Without her family's support (which manifested itself practically in a flat and a Mercedes), it would have been impossible. With it, it was tough. But she is a tough lady. She created an innovative fringe theatre in a historic building in the medieval quarter of the city and worked there for eight years bringing "theatre to the people" once a year during the holy month of Ramadan. If the book gives no clue to the marginality of her work, or to the fact that there was a great deal of theatre thriving elsewhere in the city, then that is because of a fairly high level of self-centredness in its author. But then again, it is *her* book, and she needed a degree of egocentricity in order to pursue a

career at all.

Whatever its faults, *A Bridge Through Time* has its heart in the right place. It captures some of the climate in Egypt from 1967 to 1982 and describes some significant and authentic incidents. If the frankness with which it is written signals that Ms Abou Saif has now left Egypt for good, then that would be a pity.

Earl Sullivan's *Women in Egyptian Public Life* is a statistical survey which will hardly make riveting reading for the non-specialist, does, however, provide some interesting information. Discouraging women in "traditional" spheres such as education, medicine and civil service, Professor Sullivan concentrates on women in business and politics. He finds that the class a woman is born into has a profound influence on her activity in later life: that almost all his subjects (selected from what he terms the political and business class) are also finds that while upper-middle-class women tend to go into politics and the professions, purely upper-class women go straight into big business. He finds that (unlike Laila Abou Saif) women mostly work within the framework of a supportive family while they (at least overtly) put before their careers. An exception to this is women in "opposition" – a dangerous place to be – who tend to have significantly higher divorce rates than their sisters in the NDP (the official government party). In other words, women won't toe one line are unlikely to toe another. If the chapter on presidential wives seems somewhat trusting, Professor Sullivan discards by freely admitting to the limitations of foreigner writing about his adoptive country.

Bodichon needed immortal life, perhaps, to give room to all her energy and to sustain her hope of resolutions which her tough-mindedness told her could not be achieved here.

Sheila R. Herstein's plain journeywoman style provides us with an austere and serviceable chronicle of Barbara Bodichon's life, though there are some very bad misprints for a Yale book ("Ben Johnson", "privileged", "exhilarating"). Herstein gives us much valuable information and an excellent bibliography. Her spartan tone works well in descriptions of Bodichon's endurance but she somehow misses the panache and gaiety of the personality. Of Bodichon's love-affair with John

Chapman, Herstein comments, "The scenes had melodramatic overtones: the characters were all drawn slightly larger than life. Rather, they were as large as life. The book's research will be immensely useful and gives fresh views of figures such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Ann Fader Haskell (Haskell, for example, the wife of a socialist lawyer, recorded with remarkable frankness, in a story of volumes, the ups and downs of her daily struggle to keep a home going on a dwindling family income). Women's lives are different from men's, and especially when they are housewives. Ogden's book is to be greatly welcomed for sharpening that point."

two new images – the saint and the sufferer – in the second half of the nineteenth century. The saint was the full-time wife and mother, who kept the home running smoothly; the sufferer believed in equal rights and responsibilities for women and men, and sought deliverance for herself from what was seen as male oppression. The end of the century saw an unprecedented movement of population. Rural Americans flocked to the cities, city people travelled to the prairies and there was a massive influx of European immigrants. This was behind a series of new images of the housewife, including that of the drudge. Further changes occurred during the period between 1950 and 1970 which witnessed the rise and fall of the "supermother", at the time her maternal care and competence were regarded as crucial for a healthy America. Today, claims Ogden, as more married women undertake paid work, become single parents and set up lesbian households, new images evolve.

The depth of historical scholarship in *The Great American Housewife* is rather thin, and the various images of housewives are drawn in insufficient detail. One is never sure whether they are based on ideas which were presented in domestic fiction and household manuals or on the everyday reality of women's lives as recorded in letters, unpublished letters and diaries. Not enough attention is given to social class and racial division among housewives. In the final section, where various present-day feminist views are discussed, the coverage is inadequate.

Aspects of *The Great American Housewife* are, though, fascinating and moving. In par-

ticular, the rich data in diaries and letters of long-forgotten housewives. From these we learn about the day-to-day experiences of women such as Bertha Burckell, Mary-Jane and Anno Fader Haskell (Haskell, for example, the wife of a socialist lawyer, recorded with remarkable frankness, in a story of volumes, the ups and downs of her daily struggle to keep a home going on a dwindling family income). Women's lives are different from men's, and especially when they are housewives. Ogden's book is to be greatly welcomed for sharpening that point.

Waged Work: A reader edited by Feminist Review (283pp. Virago, £5.95, 0 86068 201 0) contains a collection of articles on the debate on the changing role of women in paid employment: "Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination" by Mandy Snell, "The Reserve Army of Labour, 1974-1979" by Irene Briggs, "Pay and Skill" by Anne Phillips and Barbara Taylor, "Third World Manufacturing" by Diane Elson and Ruth Pearson, "The Myth of Male Power" by Cynthia Cockburn, "Theories of Women's Employment" by Veronica Beechey, "Women and Trade Unions" by Nicola Charles, "Black Women and the Economic Crisis" by Amina Mota, "Equalizing the European Community" by Catherine McKinnon, "Going Private" by Angela Cope and "Homeworking and the Control of Women's Work" by Sheila Allen and Carol Wolkstein. All twelve essays were first published in *Feminist Review*.

Traveller in tartan

Dervla Murphy

ALASTAIR SCOTT
Scot Free: A journey from the Arctic to New Mexico
251pp. John Murray, £10.95.
071954253 7

If travelling fruitfully is an art, Alastair Scott is an artist. His travels have been treble fruitful: for himself, for those he met on his 194,000-mile journey around the world and for his readers. Nowadays thousands of young men and women are in constant motion around the World and quite a few of them write about their trips, more or less (usually less) successfully. But Scott is not one of this herd. He is not drifting, or escaping, or crusading, or record-breaking, or fund-raising, or "looking for himself". In one sense he is a perfectly ordinary, well-balanced, contented young man; in another sense, however, he is blissfully eccentric – proof that that celebrated breed, the dotty British traveller, is not yet extinct.

Alastair Scott planned ahead shrewdly, but not constrictingly. He would devote five years to his journey, which he saw as an apprenticeship to a career as a freelance photographer. (Judging by this book's glorious illustrations, it was on apprenticeship well spent.) He would wear a kilt, "to help break down the ethnic barriers and silent stares that surround a stranger", and carry bagpipes strapped to the

end of his rucksack; by making music he hoped to earn some supper. He would start in the far north, where perhaps he could pick up a few jobs and save enough money to maintain himself in the United States and Canada. Otherwise he had no fixed plan; he just let things happen and made the most of them when they did, sometimes in situations that would have driven lesser beings on to the first plane back to Edinburgh.

The adventure began in Iceland, in mid-winter, where he painted boats. For three months he lived in the Akureyri Youth Hostel and found the locals friendly and generous, but with "an aura of complacency about them, understandable in an insular people who can grow bananas in the Arctic. They feel no intractable as their sagas and put their trust in cod."

A job on a trawler took Scott to the Faroes, and then to Greenland, which at that time "had the world's highest per capita consumption of alcohol. The average person over the age of fourteen drank two hundred bottles of beer each month." From Dakdolshevi to Thule he worked as a ship's cook, and there he was befriended by the Inuit whom he helped to kill a narwhal. He explains, "These people were not to be compared to the commercial whalers of other countries. They were not driving the whale to extinction in selfish and desperate efforts to extract what revenue remained in an industry that was dying through exploitation and indiscriminate greed. These hunters were doing no more than they had always done by taking a few whales as a necessary supply of

food for the winter months ahead."

A year after leaving home, and two-fifths of the way through this book, Scott flew from Thule to New York, thus sustaining the ultimate in culture shock. He wrote home, "Three hectic but fascinating days here are enough for someone who is not a city person", and next morning he began to litch-like south. At first he felt a trifle apprehensive about thumping – "most Americans advised against it" – but soon he had perfected his technique and discovered that abundance of goodwill towards strangers which exists throughout the United States.

Apart from his distaste for cities, Scott is a magnificently resilient and flexible traveller with a genius for adapting to his company of the moment: Icelandic mechanics, Faroese fishermen, Inuit hunters, Alaskan oilmen, Newfoundland farmers, Los Angeles policemen, Albertan Hutcruties, world-reforming Rainbow People (some stark naked) conferring in a quiet wooded corner of Washington State. If there was someone or something odd in a region, Scott found them or it. He himself – warm-hearted and witty – is a major ingredient in this book. But no less important are those he met and whose conversations he recorded with a novelist's ear for dialogue. He is enthusiastically interested in people and places, history and customs. Rarely does he find his surroundings or companions tedious or irritating; he is tolerant, but not naive.

Scot Free ends in New Mexico as the author turns south towards Latin America – and the rest of the world – leaving readers impatient for his second volume.

In north-west Guatemala, in the highlands near Lake Atitlan, there is a town called Quezaltenango, or in Mayan, "place of the Quetzal", a logical place for Maslow to begin his search. But by the time he gets there, the Quetzals have long been killed off. Maslow is directed instead to the steamy mountains on the Caribbean side. There, if he braves the government soldiers and the anti-government Freedom Fighters, he will find his birds in their only reserve, the Biotopo del Quetzal. He needs only to rent a four-wheel drive vehicle (he does this by offhandedly claiming to be with the CIA) and set off through a desolate countryside.

He finds them, and like all before him, focuses on the Quetzal's tail. Maslow states flatly that the male Quetzal, when sitting on the nest, which Quetzals always place in the hollow of a tree, flies head first into the hollow and sets, leaving his magnificence to recline without. Others say no, claiming that the Quetzal enters his hole in the tree head first and circles around till his tail is all but pulled in and lining the inside of the hole, and then sets. I find no scientific description which will seriously allow of both possibilities.

Maslow writes with the sour vision of a man with a chronic hangover, who will remember the funeral cortege, casket-laden and struggling through the streets of Chichicastenango, but entirely ignore the dignity of the procession; a man who will judiciously describe the Zopilote eating what vultures normally eat but somehow imply that it reflects not only on the government, but on the actual people themselves. The dust-jacket describes him as a naturalist, but he makes a lot of silly errors (reporting for example, that the journal *Condor*, now in its eighty-eighth year, is defunct). But he is also a truly powerful writer and an original. This is his second book (*The Owl Papers* appeared in 1983) and I look forward to more.

American Newsreel, Japan 1945

No one must ever look down on the Son of Heaven.

When the cameraman arrived with Moisodori in the palace limousine to take pictures of the Emperor and found him squatting on the sea-shore fishing seaweed out of a rockpool, this seemed to pose a problem.

But the living descendant of the Sun Goddess, creator of heaven and earth, whose sky-warriors had willingly dived into enemy ships and whose premier General Hideki Tojo had taken on his own head all responsibility for his country's war crimes, was tired of being a god.

He would rather be mortal. Something he'd learned in all the hours on the shore with his magnifying glass, researching into amoeba as the tide ran out of Segami Bay, was that one way of surviving is to be indistinguishable from sand.

VICKI FEAVER

In search of the wholly Gael

David Profumo

DEREK COOPER
The Road to Mingulay: A view of the Western Isles
226pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £12.95.
071020178 8

Something odd seems to come over writers when they cross the Minch; the results – for Barrie, Ransome, MacNeice – are coy, and out of character. Perhaps it's all that ozone and mythical gloom, but the Gaelic lifestyle has been the subject of repeated literary nostalgia, at once patronizing and sentimental, so it is to Derek Cooper's credit once again (as in his *Hebridean Connection*, 1977) that he squarely resists such specious enticements in favour of a realistic view. As a companion he admirably combines the eritic with the nesuphile, for while there is no doubting his fierce affection for things properly Hebridean, his portrait of this remarkable culture is tempered with a political anger at the disturbing neglect from which it has suffered.

This is the chronicle of a trip begun in 1983 and involving a journey southwards through the "Long Island", from industrial Stormoway (as far distant from London as is Prigue) down to the now uninhabited island of Mingulay. Part pilgrimage and part topography, the account blends autobiography with observation, as, during the course of a year, Cooper tracks down a wide variety of islanders including relations and urban fugitives alike. He visits *en route* the peat-wastes of Lewis, a crofter harvesting sea-wire in the shadow of the rocket-range on Uist, and the inhabitants of Barra – where Compton Mackenzie once penned a 100,000-word novel in thirty-one days flat. The picture presented is depressing and enchanting by turns, like Gus Wylie's accompanying photographs: the wind-scoured beauty of the landscape carries the scars of economic decline and the vestiges of abandoned projects. You don't have to be a sentimentalist to discover in the collapsed shielings and deserted lazy-beds the badges of a proud and recently flourishing civilization.

Cooper is insistent about the causes of such decay, for he sees the historical basis of land-ownership – often absentee, and increasingly corporate – as the root of this underdevelopment. It is true that until recently most economic enterprise was at the expense of the islanders themselves. An exception was Lord Leverhulme's benevolent efforts after the First World War to revitalize the resources of Harris and Lewis out of his own pocket, though only Macfisheries and some half-built factories remain as his monuments. Hebridean history suggests a systematic impoverishment of the available resources – kelp, fish and moorpower – with nothing comparable in return. Even transport and tourism have been slow to develop, and the initiative seems to depend on the mainland. As a distinguished writer about food (and whisky), Cooper is well qualified to criticize the abysmal travellers' fare, and it would appear that a gastronomic tour of the Hebrides is about as enthralling a prospect as an architectural appreciation of South Mimms, though the crofting diet has certainly improved since Martin Martin's day (1703), when it comprised "bread and water, and a snuff of tobacco".

The islanders have probably suffered as much at the hands of do-gooders as from those intent on exploitation, but there are definite signs of revival. The EEC offers agricultural subsidies, and the name of Booker McConnell means fish-farming, but the overall impression given by this articulate and atmospheric book is that the Western Isles today are characterized by contrasts and an uneasy osmosis between tradition and innovation. Cooper pinpoints these details acutely; the annual guga (gannet) cull still takes place not far from the oil-base of Lewis. Offshore, and time seals plunge in the harbour choked by consumer jetsam, while some crofters have planted out durable suburban gnomes. But despite all of this, the culture of the Gael rekindles itself like the smouldering of a fire.

Jerusalem notes

Christopher Hitchens

The dispute between the religious and the secular interpretations of life and culture has always been an issue in Jerusalem, but it now bids fair to become the issue. A poll commissioned by the Jerusalem Municipality and conducted by Hanoch Smith found that twice as many people were worried about the conflict between secular and religious as were worried about the Arab-Jewish question. In Tel Aviv, a proposal to name a street after Heinrich Heine has been vetoed by the authorities because the poet abandoned Judaism. And through the public face of the argument is the easiest to apprehend (religious zealots burn down bus shelters with "suggestive" advertisements; secular militants paint pigs and nude women on synagogue walls) it is becoming a stronger and stronger theme in literary life as well. Whereas in the novels of S. Y. Agnon the exchanges between the religious and the sceptical were conducted with humour and gentleness, today's debate has more than a trace of rancour. Simon Lovvish's new novel *The Death of Matisse-Gauf* speaks wittlingly of "The Sons of Judah" who "did not eat meat and always faced the sun even if that meant walking backwards. In Jerusalem, unfortunately, they were not conspicuous." In his wonderful novel, *The Lover*, A. B. Yehoshua was more restrained but hardly less scathing. He depicted the ultra-orthodox of the Mea Sharim quarter and said, "No, they were free men, exempt from military service and affairs of the state, making their way with dignity through a united Jerusalem looking down with scorn and strangeness on the secular people who constituted for them a kind of framework and means."

The most outspoken and combative opponent of the godly is, however, Amos Oz. In 1982 he addressed a meeting of the devout and demanded of them,

What, in truth, has happened to you in the sphere of spiritual creativity? Why are most of the creative people in this country, heaven help us, "leftists"? Is it a conspiracy? Has Damascus bought out Hebrew literature, lock, stock and barrel? How do you explain the fact that the artistic, ideological and philosophical creativity in Israel is these days taking place—not all of it, but most and perhaps even the best of it—in a defeated, wounded, crumbling camp?

A few weeks ago, writing from his base in Kibbutz Hulda for his newspaper *Davar*, Oz went even further and proposed that Israel be partitioned between the believers and the secular. "If the believing community is expanding, believing that the Messiah is at the gate, then no compromise is possible and from their point of view there is no room for tolerance or forbearance... the logic of messianism leads to partition."

Almost every literary or artistic pursuit is touched in some way by an echo of Oz's model proposal.

Secular Israelis take comfort from the heroic period of Hebrew culture, especially from Hebrew poetry in Spain in the eleventh and

FIFTY YEARS ON

The TLS of August 15, 1936, carried a review by G. C. Wheeler of V. Gordon Child's *Man Makes Himself*, from which the following extracts are taken:

Professor Child has written this outline of the prehistory and early history of culture in the Near East and Europe not as a manual of archaeology but to be "readable to those who are not concerned with the detailed problems about which specialists argue heatedly". [He] is careful to point out the continuity of prehistory and what is more usually looked on as truly "history". One of the conceptions which a philosophical historian has to deal with is "progress." Since the War and its aftermath, Professor Child points out, its reality has been widely called into question—but then indeed it is an idea of modern growth only. Today instead of the hearty belief of last century we often find "a pessimistic or mystical attitude." In ethnology, too, the German historical school has put forward a scientific doctrine of the Fall of man while "the Fascist philosophy

twelfth centuries. Although poets like Yehudi Halevi and Moses ibn Ezra were pious enough, they rejected obscurantism and sectarianism and frequently wrote in Arabic. There were periods between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries when their works were not allowed to be printed because of Orthodox disapproval, and even now some of the more broad-minded verses do not appear in popular editions or translations. Many contemporary writers and critics in Israel point to this epoch as a forerunner of the present one; a sort of Jewish reformation and counter-reformation, when a poet like Maniell Romano could be excommunicated by the rabbinate for saying in one of his satires that he preferred to go to hell because only the ugly women would go to heaven.

The early medieval Hebrew poets in Spain also incur suspicion to this day because they wrote homosexual love poetry as well as heterosexual and bisexual odes. Homosexual yearning was not automatically forbidden by the religious, but homosexual activity was. With wistful joy and delight, then, did a secular friend of mine at the Hebrew University read me a poem by ibn Ezra, of a kind that would have outraged the puritans of the day. All you need to know is that a fawn is a boy:

The desire of my heart and my eyes is to have a fawn
In my right hand and cup up at my right side.
Many are seeking me and I will not hear them.
Come, fawn, and I will defeat them.
And time will finish them and death will strike them.
Come fawn, come and give me food from the nectar
of your lips

Until I am filled.
Why are they turning my heart? If because of the sin
and because of the offence I will sin in your
beauty for God is there.

After this the poem becomes rather graphic. Ibn Ezra also wrote religious and Zionist poetry, and Halevi died on his way to Palestine, so the secular seem to have a point in arguing that the great tradition in Jewish letters does not license any authoritarian distinction between the sacred and the profane.

Apart from polemic, the special art form of Israel is music. Jerusalem is alive with concerts, and everywhere there are schoolchildren with instrument cases and sheet music. The radio devotes an extraordinary amount of air time to classical broadcasts, and conductors are household names. This means that the battle over Wagner and (to a lesser extent) Strauss is carried on with unusual vigour. Wagner's music is under a formal and informal ban. The sale of records and tapes is no longer prohibited, though it is unknown for a music shop to display them ostentatiously. The State-owned radio and television will not transmit Wagner, except in snatches for the purpose of illustration. Only his name, once prohibited, can be broadcast. Every now and then, attempts are made to break the unspoken ban on public performances. Things have improved since Jascha Heifetz, the great violinist, had a piece of Wagner arranged for the violin and included it in one of his concerts in the 1950s. He was assaulted and had his hands battered with an

expounded most openly by Herr Hitler and his academic supporters, but sometimes masquerading as eugenics in Britain and America," identifies progress with a mystical biological evolution. To settle their doubts, says Professor Child, men should turn to history; and one purpose in this book is "to suggest that, viewed from an impersonal scientific standpoint, history may still justify a belief in progress," not only as we believed in it in the heyday of a bygone summer but also in our own more wintry day. Professor Child, who seems to be much impressed by the Marxists' "realist conception of history" with the alluring simplicity of its economic stress, holds that "history is tending to become cultural history." He suggests that the historian's "progress" may be the equivalent of the zoologist's evolution; for prehistory, while it carries written history backwards, also "carries on natural history forwards," and is "a bridge between human history and the natural sciences of zoology, palaeontology, and geology."

iron bar. Two years ago, Zubin Mehta conducted the Israeli Philharmonic and included a Wagner overture in the concert. Although the piece came at the end, and even though Mehta announced that those who might be offended would therefore miss nothing by leaving, there was an energetic disruption (led by a Polish convert from Catholicism) and the performance was abandoned.

Since that incident, a book has been published entitled, *Who's Afraid of Richard Wagner?* Several aspects of a controversial personality. The collection includes Wagner's own notorious anti-Jewish writings, Bernard Shaw on the Perfect Wagnerite and other more or less contemporary writings by Mann and Baudelaire. Almost all the Israeli contributors to the book now favour the lifting of the ban on Wagner. Typical is the argument of Yehuda Cohen, a composer and former music editor for Israeli Radio, who has lectured at the Boyreuth Festival. Without defending Wagner as a person, he writes that a nation like Israel, so much threatened by various cultural boycotts, has "a sevenfold obligation" not to replicate their mentality. He also argues that it is bad enough to deprive those who do like Wagner, but even worse to withhold him from those who might come to admire him.

In a related letter in the *Jerusalem Post*, the flautist Uri Toepfritz urges that the Israeli Philharmonic celebrate its forthcoming fiftieth anniversary by admitting Richard Strauss "Nazi collaborator and anti-Semite (both sporadically)" to its repertoire. Toepfritz argues that Strauss saved at least one Jew, his daughter-in-law, and that the playing of his symphonic poems, written at the end of the last century, would enrich both players and audience.

Again, there will be orthodox opposition, as in the past, to concerts featuring "Gentile" culture. But is this not to make the same blunder as those who once spoke of "Jewish science"?

On a different sector of the musical front, there is about to be a revival of the extremely successful Hebrew version of *My Fair Lady*. It will be performed at the Habima Theatre in Tel Aviv under the title of *Givri Hono'ava*, with Shlomo Bar-Shavit taking the part of Higgins and the popular "Rita" as Eliza. How on earth,

you ask, do the vernacular combats of *Così* Garden and Bow translate into Hebrew? Very well, is the answer. *Barnd* means "hall", *Yard* means "fell". *Be'Seefard* means "in Spain". "Ba-rad, pom-pom, Ya-rad, Be Sefer" — all think she's got it.

The controversy over Claude Lanzmann's documentary *Shoah* is unlikely to slacken with the revelation that it was financed, to the tune of about \$850,000, by Menachem Begin, Ellyahu Ben-Elisar, who was director-general of Begin's office when he was Prime Minister, has revealed that the donation, which is not acknowledged in the film's credits, was made on Begin's express instruction through the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs. The film's critics say that *Shoah* depicts all Poles people in an unfavourable light, and conveys a surreptitious charge of racial blood-guilt. Since this is a charge made publicly and privately by supporters of Mr Begin's Revisionist movement, it might have been better to admit the contribution they made to the genesis of the film.

About five years ago, the Jerusalem Poetry Workshop was convened in order to act as a kind of melting pot for the different languages and cultures represented in the city. Many of the poets were monoglot; others were able to write in more than one tongue, or to translate. The result is a new magazine devoted both to poetry and prose, with contributions in various languages; English being the *lingua franca*. Even here, there are traces of the religious and confessional strife which has disfigured and which still disfigures the city. In Eva Shabat's poem "Liturgia", for instance, figures are discerned singing psalms in Jerusalem:

Singing psalms—
the sons and daughters
of those
who slaughtered
the sons and daughters
of those
who wrote them . . .

The magazine is called *Seven Gates* and can be contacted at 214/36 Jaffa Road, Jerusalem 97801.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Abel is lecturer in Latin American History at University College London. His *Just War: Revolutionary democracy* will be published this autumn.

J. B. Barry is a bibliographer and architectural historian.

Patrick Collinson's most recent book is *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism, 1580-1640*. Eduardo Crawley is the editor of the *Latin American Newsletter*. His *Dilemma Never Die: A portrait of Nicaragua and the Somoceros* was published in 1979. He is the author of *A House Divided: Argentina 1880-1980, 1984*.

Winton Dean is the author of *Handel and the Opera Series, 1665*.

Filippo Dodini was formerly Director of the Italian Institute in London. John Drory's most recent book, *The Parables in the Gospels: History and allegory*, was reviewed in the TLS July 25.

Barbara Everett is a Senior Research Fellow at Somerville College, Oxford. Her *Poets in their Time* will be published this autumn.

Peter France is Professor of French at the University of Edinburgh, and author of *Diderot, 1984*, in the *Yale Masters Series*.

P. N. Farbank's *Isola Svevo: The man and the writer* was published in 1966. His most recent book is *Unhappy Pleasures: Or, the idea of social class, 1985*.

John A. C. Greppin is Professor of Linguistics at Cleveland State University and the editor of the *Journal of Armenian Linguistics*. His most recent publications include *Classical and Middle Armenian Bird Names, 1982*.

Francis Haskell is Professor of Fine Art at the University of Oxford and author of *Rediscoveries in Art: Some aspects of taste, fashion and collecting in England and France, 1976*.

P. N. Johann-Laird is Assistant Director of the Medical Research Council Applied Psychology Unit, and a Fellow of Darwin College, Cambridge. His books include *Mental Models, 1983*.

Brian Lee is Head of the American Studies Department at the University of Nottingham. His *The American Novel, 1965-1980*, will be published shortly.

Anna Laura Lepeschy is the author of *Narrative e teatro fra due secoli: Verga, Invernalio, Svevo, Pirandello, 1984*.

R. A. Markus is Professor Emeritus of Medieval History at the University of Nottingham. He is the author of *Christianity in the Roman World, 1974*.

Jullion Moynahan is a Professor of English at Rutgers University. He is working on a critical study of the tradition of Anglo-Irish Literature from Maria Edgeworth to early Beckett and Elizabeth Bowen.

Dervik Murphy's *Eight Feet in the Andes* was published in 1983. Her *Middling Through in Modigliani's career* came out last year.

Martha Nussbaum is Professor of Philosophy, Classics and Comparative Literature at Brown University, and the author of *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and ethics in Greek Tragedy and philosophy*, which will be published earlier this year.

June Purvis is currently writing a book on the education of working-class women in nineteenth-century England.

Trevor J. Saunders is Professor of Greek at the University of Newcastle and currently Visiting Fellow at the Humanities Research Centre, Canberra. His revised and edited translation of Aristotle's *Politics* is published in the Penguin Classics series.

André Sorel's collection of stories, *Alejo*, appeared in 1983.

J. B. Spence is Professor of Politics at the University of Leicester, and co-editor of *British Politics in Perspective, 1983*. His book *South Africa in International Society* will be published next year.

Letters

Cultural Property

Sir, — Michael Dummett (July 25) writes eloquently in praise of patriotism — at least, of the form of patriotism which consists in loyalty to a land and its history, and to the bonds enshrined in a common culture. And, since great art can be conceived only as a part of such a culture, he feels entitled to his conclusion, that "only the Greeks have the right to claim the monuments of ancient Greece as peculiarly theirs".

British patriotism is presumably as legitimate as the Greek variety. And the system of loyalties which has so far guaranteed our continuity should prompt us to be a little prouder of our "imperial" past than Professor Dummett seems to wish us to be. It was not through "political and military" power that we accumulated our treasures, but through the same spirit of enterprise and adventure that animated the ancient Greeks, and which caused our people to venture forth, frequently unprotected, in search of trade, or discovery, or a place where they might start life peacefully anew. They went, too, in the service of the Christian religion and the British Crown. But the "political and military power" which they enhanced thereby was no much the consequence of commerce as the cause of it. Not everything that they did in their travels was honest or commendable — any more than was everything done by the ancient Greeks, who accumulated such wealth and glory in their city states at home. But are we to dispossess ourselves of our history, for the sake of scruples which no rival culture has ever shared?

One visible record of our former greatness is the British Museum and its contents. Why is this not a "monument", an object of loyalty, affection and pride? And why do those feelings not establish, for us, a right of ownership in the achievements of our ancestors, of which this great accumulation is one? The Parthenon may have been made in Athens. But its principal ingredient, human labour, was brought from elsewhere — from those places which had the misfortune to lose out in the contest for Mediterranean power, and whose people were often brought as slaves to the metropolises that had worsted them. Nevertheless, Dummett is quite right in thinking of this noble pile as a Greek creation, and one which naturally belongs on the acropolis of Athens.

Whatever we may feel about the Elgin Marbles, it is clear that these appeals to patriotic sentiment can have no power to settle the question of ownership. As Dummett's article illustrates, even meticulous philosophers can, when discussing art, ascribe rights of ownership in the most erratic way, and to things which do not and cannot possess them. Only persons have rights, and while the class of persons includes states, corporations and individuals, it is questionable whether it also includes such an entity as "The Greeks" (defined, incidentally, so as to include both the population of ancient Athens, and the citizens of the modern state). If ownership by the Greek State is to be justified by the "rights" of the Greek "people", then we ought to be a little clearer about the meaning of the word "people", and a little clearer about the claims of the Greek State to speak on behalf of those who are at present governed by it. It may not be true that Lord Elgin had the right to purchase the Marbles, or the Sublime Porte the right (of indeed the intention) to abrogate them. But works of art are bought and sold, even works which enshrine the identity of a "people", as completely as the Marbles of the Parthenon. Are all such transactions illegitimate, and if so, does this mean that the greater an artist, and the more expressive of a time and culture, the less right does he have to sell the product of his labour? It would be a strange world that said so, and, whatever its virtues in the eyes of those who think in collectivist ways about the ownership of art, I doubt very much that real art would be produced in it.

ROGER SCRUTON
64/2 Links Weybridge, A-1060 Vienna.

Sir, — An interesting precedent for the restitution of looted cultural property, so admirably documented by Robert Browning (July 25), is afforded by the United Nations' Peace Treaty

with Italy. Signed in 1947, it states, in Article 37, that Italy should "restore all works of art, religious objects, archives and objects of historical value belonging to Ethiopia or its nationals removed from Ethiopia to Italy since October 3, 1935", that is, the date of Mussolini's invasion.

Though a manuscript and two crowns looted from Ethiopia over half a century earlier by the British expedition of 1867-8 against Emperor Tewodros were subsequently returned, as Professor Browning rightly notes, the greater part of the booty remains in this country. It includes part of Tewodros's hair and the amulet he wore at the time of his suicide, as well as several remarkable processional crosses and some five hundred fine manuscripts, a number of them beautifully illustrated.

RICHARD PANKHURST
22 Lawn Road, London NW3.

Aspects of Copyright

Sir, — It was a pleasure to hear from my friend Jon Silkin, albeit indirectly, about his "editorial impasse" (July 25). If he had written to me before, he need never have found himself in his present predicament. Since the precise nature of his impasse, however, will not be clear to your readers from his article, perhaps I may offer them a little more background?

Early in the 1970s, the late Harold Owen invited me to undertake a "complete" edition of his brother's poems. This took ten years and many thousands of dollars in transatlantic, transamerican air-fares between libraries holding Owen manuscripts; in hotel, photographing, photocopying, research assistant, and secretarial expenses. The result, *Wilfred Owen: The Complete Poems and Fragments* (1983) was heroically published by Chatin and Windus at an immense cost, which they could never hope to recover from the sale of that scholarly two-volume edition. To achieve a price that libraries — at least — could afford, its editor and the Owen family agreed to a substantial reduction in their respective, contractually agreed, rates of royalty. A year and a half later, Chatin published a cheap paperback edition that offered the student and the general reader all but seven of the (early) poems in the two-volume edition, plus twelve of the more important fragments. Editor and publisher hoped with this paperback to recover at least some of the costs of *The Complete Poems and Fragments*.

Enter, then, Mr Silkin with a Penguin edition of *Wilfred Owen: The Poems* (1985) that, without permission, reproduced five pages of copyright material from Day Lewis's 1963 edition, seven pages from the 1983 *Complete Poems and Fragments*, and three copyright photographs. Fifteen other poems that he printed incorporated a large number of variants — substantive as well as accidental — lifted from the latter. Chatin protested and Penguin, to their credit, apologized and withdrew the book.

One must ask, however, how an experienced editor and an experienced publisher could find themselves in such an "impasse" (to adopt Silkin's revealing euphemism)? I do not know. Did my "misunderstanding" friend (to adopt another of his euphemisms) believe that copyright extended, simply, for fifty years from an author's death? Seemingly not, since he also lifted five-and-a-half pages — without acknowledgment to copyright-holder or publisher — from Sassoon's *Siegfried's Journey*, and Sassoon died in 1967.

Silkin says that "Stillworthy seems to believe that what he has done has been done once and for all, and that his edition precludes further change". I cannot guess his authority for this statement when there has been an communication between us since I organized a poetry reading for him in America some years ago. No editor in his right mind could believe that his work "precludes further change".

To avoid the impasse in which Silkin finds himself, one must follow the example of Dominic Hibberd, whose edition of Owen's *War Poems and Other* (1973) Silkin does not mention. Perhaps this is not surprising, since it is so much better than his own and since Dr Hibberd was allowed to improve on Day Lewis's texts at something like seventy points.

Is he secret? He respected the law of copyright and negotiated mutually acceptable terms with

the Owen Estate. And lest anyone reading Silkin's article should have assumed that the Trustees of the Owen Estate are also its beneficiaries, I must state emphatically that this is not so. The Trustees receive nothing for their labours. Hibberd is not a Trustee, but he and I receive payment, as editors, for our editorial work. The rest of the income from Owen's writings goes to the Owen family — except, of course, in the case of Silkin's edition.

For reasons that I hope will now be clear, Owen's Trustees and publishers see no need at present to authorize a new edition of the poems, making extensive use of copyright material, let alone one as incomplete, inaccurate and self-indulgent in its annotation as Silkin's. Anthologists and critics, however, applying to Chatin and Windus for permission to use texts (with new copyright variants) of familiar (and otherwise out-of-copyright) poems, will be charged an appropriate fraction of the standard copyright fee or, in some case, no fee at all. I cannot recall an instance of such an anthologist or critic being refused permission to introduce a variant that he or she had proposed.

Mr Silkin says that "editors build upon each other's work", and borrows that verb from the introduction to *The Complete Poems and Fragments* in which I recorded my own grateful indebtedness to Siegfried Sassoon and Edith Sitwell, Edmund Blunden, Cecil Day Lewis and Dominic Hibberd. He will escape from other such impasses if, in the future, he remembers that "building" does not mean flouting the laws of copyright.

JON STILLWORTHY
Long Farm, Eisleigh Road, Old Marston, Oxford.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens

Sir, — I cannot imagine where Edward Mendelson got his information about why the Art Commission of the City of New York disapproved of the installation of Augustus Saint-Gaudens's "Standing Lincoln" at Lincoln Center (Commentary, April 25), but clearly it was not by being present at the Commission's deliberations on it (our meetings are open to the public) or by interviewing any member of the Commission or its administrative staff in City Hall. Had he done so he would have seen that all three reasons for disallowance he attributes to the Commission are incorrect.

The Commission objected not to the sculpture but to the particular siting proposed for it — a siting which, after many hours of discussion, turned out to be non-negotiable on the part of the statue's private donor.

I feel that I can speak for the other Members of the Commission in resenting Mr Mendelson's implication, that because of some onedivine modernist attitudes, the Art Commission is incapable of appreciating the qualities of Saint-Gaudens. To claim that the Commission "simply didn't like it" is a distortion of the truth.

JOHN WILLENBECHER
Art Commission of the City of New York, City Hall, New York, New York 10007.

Jesus' Genealogy

Sir, — Edward Ullendorff (Letters, August 1) is of course right so far as he goes, but why does he omit Thamar (Tamar) in Saint Matthew, chapter 1, verse 3, and Rachab in verse 5, both "specifically and crucially mentioned"?

EDMUND LEACH
11 West Green, Barrington, Cambridge.

'Two-Headed Monster'

Sir, — I'm surprised Tim Dingley in his review (August 1) of *Two-Headed Monster* thinks my poem about Mrs Thutdier is "untouched by any glance of irony". I begin by describing her habit when shaking hands on formal occasions of pulling her guests past her just as they start to speak. It's true that the irony is mostly directed at myself and the other guests, but I wouldn't want anyone to think the poem leaves her uncriticized.

C. B. COX
20 Park Gates Drive, Chesham, Bucks, Stockport.

British Library Lending Services

Sir, — I have been coming to London for many years to the British Library Reading Room. My work requires access to a wide range of mainly recent literature, British and foreign, including American, and until now the Reference Division has ensured provision at one and the same time of an unrivalled range of both books and periodicals. Lending from this collection will destroy a reference tool of world importance, drawing users from far and wide and turn it into just another big library with many gaps in its recent holdings. As U. M. McKean points out (Letters, July 25), cuts in library finance in Britain have forced other academic libraries to buy fewer and fewer foreign books, so they obviously need an inter-library loan service of the kind so ably performed until now by the British Library Lending Division using its own stock and that of other (non-BL) collections. But the demand for loans of foreign books will now increase at the very time when the BL is proposing to use for that purpose what may well be the only copies in the country, forgetting that there is bound to be matching demand for reference use of the same material.

Should the BL be lending potentially unique copies? It would seem to me dangerous to do so, if one remembers the archival function of the Reference Division and the fact that current reference material is the basis of the future's historical studies. On the other hand, if the BL knows of the existence of other copies of requested material outside the Reference Division, then surely they are the ones which should be lent.

It is not the place of a foreign visitor to say how British money should be spent, but it seems to me that, when one looks at the national picture of library provision in the UK, there is a very strong case for ensuring that the Reference Division does not have to suffer to maintain the BL's loan service; both are essential.

PIERANGIOLO BERRETONI
Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, Università di Perugia, Perugia, Italy.

Sir, — Is it significant in the correspondence about the new category of "lending material" to be created in the British Library that not a single scholar or writer has expressed approval? A quick, one-day, unprofessional random sample of readers revealed unanimous condemnation, which points to a weakness in the consultative machinery between the Library administration and users.

The British Library Advisory Committee certainly includes professors, librarians and even one illustrious representative of the media, Magnus Magnusson, but there is no direct representation for the day-to-day workers of the Library and few, if any committee members, are, to the best of my knowledge, regular users. The minutes of the Committee reveal that the revolutionary creation of a new lending category, striking at the intrinsic identity of the Library, did come before its members and met with one or two very weak murmurs of disapproval. After eight years serving on the Committee myself I formed the opinion that there was a danger of the Committee becoming a rubber stamp for certain decisions which had already been taken.

I fully appreciate the need to meet inflation by enlarging revenue, but should it be without effective consultation when it challenges the whole basis on which the Library works? In the past, several surveys of readers' identity, profession and preferences have been carried out. Is there still time for a referendum on the beginnings of a fundamental change which would bring Parizzi hurrying back from his grave?

VINCENT BROME
45 Great Ormond Street, London WC1.

The British National Bibliography Research Fund is sponsoring a one-day seminar on electronic transmission standards for the book world, to be held on Wednesday, October 15 at the Royal Over-Seas League in London. Details are available from Derek Greenwood, British Library Research and Development Department, 2 Sheraton Street, London W1V 4BH.

COMMENTARY

English airs

Winton Dean

HENRY PURCELL
King Arthur
G.F. Handel
Ariadante
Buxton Festival

One of many pleasing features of the Buxton Festival is that it propounds a theme round which most events are grouped. This year's was King Arthur. In operative terms - Buxton possesses its own delightful Opera House - the Dryden-Purcell senior opera of 1691 was a natural first choice; the second was Handel's *Ariadante*, remotely connected to the theme through its source in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and a masterpiece in its own right. Unfortunately both works employ a chorus and dancers, two departments in which Buxton, no doubt for good economic reasons, is not strong, and in addition *King Arthur* requires a double cast of singers and actors, not to mention spectacular scenery.

All English semi-operas fall between two stools, since the principal characters are not required to sing. *King Arthur* is especially problematic owing to the unavailability of Dryden's political allegory, which suffered a radical change of direction between conception and performance. It is difficult to tell when he is being ironical, or how much this mattered to Purcell. The music is always intensely dramatic, though its links with the main action are often tenuous. It is true that the spirits Philidel and Grimbald, as befits descendants of Ariel and Caliban, sing as well as speak, and when they do they propel the plot towards true opera. But this only occurs once or twice. While Purcell rises splendidly to the patriotic scenes and is always at home with the pastoral, especially when tinged with sensuality, he is mostly concerned to evoke the magic background, a world of fantasy and illusion, which he does with marvellous eloquence.

Since *King Arthur* lives by the music, Malcolm Fraser was right to concentrate on it and take a knife to the dialogue; to do full justice to both would have entailed heavy expense in time and resources. The action, played behind a gauze with a huge portrait of Merlin that never quite disappeared, was agreeable to the eye despite an intermittent suggestion of named rites. Fay Conway designed an attractive backdrop for the "Fairiest Isle"; Terry Gilbert's choreography suited the pastoral episodes better than the more solemn moments. The celebrated frost scene, with the finest music in the score, was allowed to degenerate prematurely into comedy; Cupid mocks the Cold Genius, but his music should freeze us first. Anthony Hise let the pace sag here, as he did also in "Fairiest Isle", but otherwise his direction of the Manchester Camera was crisp and lively. The small group of singers, doubling as soloists, chorus and sometimes dancers, acquitted themselves well, especially Eileen Hulse (a pure-toned Cupid), Steven Page (Cold Genius) and Barry Banks (in most of the minor roles). Alan Bates and Lucy Gutteridge made the most of what remained of Dryden's dialogue.

If the production of *King Arthur* was aimed in the right direction, that of *Ariadante* was not. The besetting sin of producers of Handel's operas is a refusal to trust the music or the dramatic genius of the composer or the intelligence of the listener. The plot of *Ariadante* is so straightforward, its design so varied, and its characters so vividly realized that no concessions are needed for an audience unfamiliar with the convention. Even the omission of chorus and ballet, essential as they are to a complete realization, need not bring the opera to the ground. Ian Judge, the producer, seemed determined at all costs to undercut the music. He began with an appeal for a cheap laugh by having Ginevra strip and take a bubble bath, watched by a lustful Polinesso, during her first aria (addressed to her mirror in the presence only of her maid Dalinda). After that it was no surprise to see two horn players in evening dress stroll on with their music for the King's first aria and Ariadante swigging wine during the ritornellos of the next; any-

thing, it seemed, to tickle the eye at the expense of the ear. Worse followed in the great reception scene of Act Two, where Polinesso arranges for Dalinda, dressed in her mistress's clothes, to admit him to Ginevra's apartment, watched by Ariadante, Ginevra's betrothed. Polinesso and Dalinda were to be seen coupling on an outside bed throughout two arias, one of them Ariadante's superb lament "Scherza infida". This, like the parallel incident in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, is an open-air scene in a garden; to introduce the bed-fudge had to tinker with the plot, as he did repeatedly, always to his disadvantage, throughout the evening. Yet he muffed every one of the striking dramatic opportunities offered by the score, from the surprise of the King's first entry to Ginevra's final rescue from prison. A singularly unhelpful set suited none of the locations in which the action takes place.

The efforts of a respectable cast were largely frustrated, even when they were not impeded by the grotesque acrobatics which they were required to execute (unless they happened to be lying full length) while singing their parts. James Bowman, a superb Polinesso in voice and action, emerged comparatively unscathed. Eirian James made much of Ariadante's brilliant music, but in her last aria rushed about as if training for the Commonwealth Games and proclaiming one of Liner's goals in Mexico City. Rosa Mannion missed the full flavour of Ginevra's part; her promising soprano developed a hard edge in the higher register which might have been less obtrusive had she been allowed to keep still. Meryl Dwyer (Dalinda) and Christopher Gillett (Lurcanio) clearly knew what their music was about; their beautiful duet in Act Three was one of the few moments in which it was permitted to speak without interference. The orchestra again played well, and Anthony Hise's tempos were nicely judged; but whatever induced him to revive the bad old habit of delaying all recitative cadences?

The score was brutally cut. The decision to play the ballet music between the acts added insult to injury. Inevitably it was drowned by the chatter of the audience, and it extended the intervals to little short of an hour. There would have been ample time to restore some of the dozen emasculated arias; three others, at least one of them crucial, were cut. This was an opportunity sadly missed. It could only confirm the philistine belief that Handel's operas are so many joints to be carved up ad lib. They are fully integrated musical dramas, and unless they are approached with a corresponding degree of integrity there is little point in performing them at all.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 290

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow, and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than September 5. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration. Entries, marked "Author, Author 290" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on September 12.

1 I saw my Meg come 'linkin o'er the lee;
I saw my Meg, but Meggy no saw me;
For yet the sun was wading thro' the mist,
And she was class upon me ere she wist;
Her coats were kilts, and did sweetly show
Her straight bare legs that whiter were than snow;
Her cockerony snooded up fou sleek,
Her heft-locks hang waving on her cheek;
Her cheek aae ruddy, and her een soe elcor;
And O! her mouth's like ony hiny pear.

2 Meg grabbed her hat and set out for Windmill, the
Cowgate slowly unweaving his rug, up in Royal Mile
the torries were following over the calanys, Paddy
Portia littering his doors with weans, snuffly and
ragged, kids off to school, scrawling dirty things on
the pavement, some throwing filth and checking a
lassie. . . . She'd get out of this place, get a lodging
somewhere in Tanglehul or the Ecclesgrange.

3 Meg, in the meanwhile, went off to a great black
cauldron that was boiling on a fire on the floor, and
lifting the lid, an odour was diffused through the

Scotch philosophers

Peter France

A Hetbed of Genius: The Scottish
Enlightenment 1730-1790
National Museums of Scotland, Queen Street,
Edinburgh, until September 30

"Here I stand at what is called the Cross of Edinburgh and can, in a few minutes, take fifty men of genius and learning by the hand." People have been quoting this gratifying remark of an English scholar visiting eighteenth-century Edinburgh for so long that it is surprising to recall that the concept of a Scottish Enlightenment is a relatively new one. It has flourished over the last two decades, however, and this year sees it triumph in its old centre, Edinburgh. Not only is it a main theme of this year's Festival; it is also being ceptiously celebrated by the University of Edinburgh's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities - so copiously indeed that there is some danger of overkill. A large programme of lectures and seminars culminates in four concurrent conferences at the end of August. Meanwhile, a major exhibition, *A Hetbed of Genius*, sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland, is showing at the Queen Street building of the National Museums of Scotland. The same title is used for an accompanying book, edited by David Niches, Peter Jones and Jean Jones (160pp, with 37 colour and 146 black-and-white illustrations. University of Edinburgh Press. Paperback, £10.95, 0 85224 537 8); although this splendidly illustrated volume shares the same emphases as the exhibition and uses much of the same material, it is not just a catalogue, but a set of six well-informed essays which give a valuable introduction to the main ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment.

For the organizers of an exhibition, it is a problem that the Enlightenment is a movement of ideas - books, papers, prints and above all talk. An original solution has been found, using new technology in a way that would have appealed to the men who produced the first *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The first part of the exhibition, designed by John L. Paterson, is an attempt at recreating the atmosphere of eighteenth-century intellectual Edinburgh. Equipped with a light-weight headset, the visitor penetrates into dimly lit cellars, filled with reproductions of old documents, soft sculptures of philosophers and drinkers and enlarged negatives of prints of the Modern Athens, luridly displayed by tungsten-halogen ultraviolet lighting. As one moves from room to room, the headset picks up modulated light signals and converts them into a series of five-minute scripts. These are composed of com-

mentary, dialogue, song and asserted sound effects - the essential thing being the dialogue, which uses the printed words of David Hume, Adam Smith, Joseph Black and James Hutton to convey their theories on (respectively) causation, division of labour and free trade, latent heat and the theory of the earth. It sounds a tall order, but to judge from the very favourable comments of visitors, the show is pitched at the right level. It is essentially educational, but it does its teaching (as its subjects would have wished) with a fair degree of naturalness and humour, using a visit of Franklin to Edinburgh to link the different sections and bringing out, as a purely visual exhibition could not, the conviviality of club and tavern and the fact that however it looks in print, this was Enlightenment with a Scottish accent.

The upstairs rooms contain the real meat of the exhibition, a more familiar mix of objects, pictures and print, again concentrating on Hume, Smith, Black and Hutton. Hutton's geology lends itself best of all to visual presentation. Here is a boulder from Glen Tilt, the place that allowed Hutton to verify his theories about granite, and photographs and prints of the "unconformities" at Jedburgh, Siccar Point and Salisbury Crags which gave credence to the immense new time-scale he proposed for the history of the earth. Few of the other exhibits can match these for excitement, but taken together they form a most interesting (and admirably annotated) collection, ranging from a board showing pins at different stages of manufacture (a brilliant illustration of the famous chapter in *The Wealth of Nations*) to the beautiful letter from Black to Smith on Hume's death. Solemnity is properly kept at bay by a liberal sprinkling of John Kay's caricatures. There are sections devoted to art and culture (not the most original aspect of the Scottish Enlightenment) and to new developments in agriculture, industry and commerce, but in the centre of the stage are the great philosophers, doctors, lawyers and scientists. It all seems - as indeed it was - very much a neo-only affair; it is a sign of our further enlightenment that it is a woman, Jean Jones, who was the guiding spirit behind the whole exhibition?

In the past, some have seen the "Scotch philosophers" as dull dogs. *A Hetbed of Genius* (book and exhibition alike) conveys, on the contrary, an evident sense of admiration for these inventive, progressive yet moderate men, dedicated to improving the life of their society. The authors may exaggerate - as is normal in such a presentation - the centrality of the Scots in the vast European movement of Enlightenment. What is more, compared with some of their Continental counterparts, the literati of Edinburgh sometimes seem a bit too sensible and comfortable. Even so, one can hardly fail to come away from this exhibition greatly impressed, both by the intellectual energy of this hotbed of genius, and by the skill with which it has been presented.

2 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land, and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.
John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, book 7.

3 Through poisonous fumes of Persius
Goes - clogged sword, clear, sinless mirror
With nothing to strike at or blind in the frothed
abysses.
Geoffrey Hill: "The Death of Shelley"



Joseph Black by John Kay, 1787, from the exhibition reviewed here.

A congregation of solitaires

Barbara Everett

T.S. ELIOT
The Cocktail Party
Phoenix Theatre

The newly founded New Theatre Company, committed to bringing serious drama back to the West End, has opened at the Phoenix with T.S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*. Since this is only the second of the play's London productions in the nearly forty years since it first appeared, the occasion is something of an event on both counts.

John Dexter has directed with what seems a firm intention to make of the play a drama for the 1980s. Eliot's other masterpiece *Cas* (advertised on the programme's endpaper) could almost have suggested itself as a model. For this *Cocktail Party* is vivid, warm, showy, noisy and a little empty. It even has music, not the music of poetry but strong, sweet and pervasive accompaniment from onstage and offstage pianos. The sets won applause on the first night: Twenties designs of immense claustrophobic stridency, transforming to (Thirties) white, with bowls of lilies, for the third-act finale - an effect of Syrie Maugham crossed by an Annunciation. The visual impact is complicated by the fact that the company, looking vulnerable, have to keep their end up while wearing the post-war New Look.

There is plenty in the production to provoke the mind by filling the eye. If, as often in the theatre of the 1980s, the sets threaten to crush the characters, this conception of the characters fights back by being fairly external too. John Dexter has brought the play up to date by everywhere humanizing, socially de-classing, eroticizing. The participants in what was conceived as a comedy of manners have become broader and cruder, have softened and blurred. This is particularly striking in the case of the three women. Lavinia is no longer a middle-aged middle-class battle-axe, nor Julia a well-off nuisance, nor Celia an aristocratic arrogant young idealist. Sheila Allen renders

the first into a Bayswater beauty, Rachel Kennison dithers through the second as a dotty old dear, and - most surprisingly - Sheila Gish finds in Celia a friendly West End trouper. More geared to detachment and formality, the men still seem to be acting (well) in a different play altogether. Simon Ward's Edward has a nice humour and poise, but in shedding his character's cold harristerial blankness he deprives Lavinia of any reason for leaving him. The callow Peter, Celia's romantic young counterpart (Lavinia's ex-lover, as Celia is Edward's) is endowed by Stephen Boxer with some almost too fine delicacies of feeling. Robert Edlison brings exquisite elderly intentions of goodness to the debonair, vaguely Foreign Office Alex. And Alec McCowan's psychiatrist, the great Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, not merely departs from the Guinness-Harrison interpretations of this enigma, but simply abandons the notion of the character as enigmatic at all. His Reilly is a totally new and studied portrayal: an extrovert, barking, manic, highly "distinguished" doctor, sworn to save his patients even if he kills them in the process: a funny, sinister, momentarily brilliant (if embarrassing) Cerebral-Party-piece.

Does it matter that the evening's central performance is so thoroughly Slavian? I think it must, given that Shaw's studies of men of power are so much better than this. And given, even more, that Eliot ton has his own idiosyncratic and strangely impressive quality as a dramatist, to which attention is hardly being paid in this production. *The Cocktail Party*, called in the programme Eliot's "most famous comedy", and sometimes now referred to as a "classic", lacks (to my mind) the intensity of *Sweeney*, the power of *The Family Reunion*, even the dry sweetness of the unpopular *Confidential Clerk*. Here and there chilly or fumbling or merely didactic, *The Cocktail Party* is, however, preserved by a peculiar integrity of mind, intelligence and wit. It is a penetrating moral irony, above all on the subject of love, that gives Eliot as a dramatist his light yet steely resilience. Never acquiring the true dramatic gift that unites dramatists from Eur-

ipides to Rattigan, the vision of human lives necessarily interacting, Eliot none the less found something like dramatic action for his congregations of solitaires by holding on to this integrity. The predecessor of *The Cocktail Party* was *The Family Reunion*, written at the end of the 1930s in a context of cosy fictions of homecomings, and under the shadow of coming war. And its action derives from its hero's moral decision to reverse his family's hard-won reunion, and to convert mere homecoming to *diaspora* and pilgrimage. *The Confidential Clerk* would in the early 1950s follow *The Cocktail Party* with a curiously similar story of a young man rejecting a matrix of misused security for a future based in the home of a humble North London nobody. Thus, a play almost self-parodyingly cast as West End Comedy points outwards to the unsuited suburbs as its centre of human grid.

The Cocktail Party has the same tough moral irony. It may be observed that Dexter's production of this comedy of manners unfortunately lacks - in fact - manners. Edward and Lavinia in turn see off their guests (who happen to be elderly) sitting down, with back turned. At the cocktail party men quickly tear off black ties. But Eliot's play men precisely in terms of a world in which men are tied down by more than merely ties: a social world that is, in the end, all conventions, all surfaces, all manners meaning nothing. Society is bound by love, yet love is here illusion. Only when they perceive, and perceiving can embrace, the violence and void beneath the surface of their own "social" characters can the strangers who meet as guests advance to a love that is not illusion: to kindness, human service, vision of God or just cocktail party. Proclaiming "Honesty before honour", Reilly, Julia and Alex - the three peculiarly social angels - drink their libation to the Death of the Heart. This hard-edged, instructive, sometimes splendidly funny moral irony is not everybody's choice for an evening at the theatre. But it is an inimitable one, and in failing to provide it Dexter's strong and successful production carries within itself a sense of betrayal.

Accelerating the decline

Brian Lee

EUGENE O'NEILL
Long Day's Journey Into Night
Theatre Royal Haymarket

Eugene O'Neill's great faults are well known. They have been thoroughly rehearsed both in stage performances and in academic analysis. For a start he wrote very badly, his prose alternating between a grinding, repetitive realism in which the banal particularities of American life are tediously amassed, and an overblown poetic style heavily freighted with portentous symbolism and meaningful imagery. Sometimes, as in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, he even contrived to combine both these modes in one play. Secondly, he had, by all orthodox standards, a deficient sense of dramatic structure. His efforts to marry linearity to circularity usually ended in a sort of geometric anarchy, marionette characters and audience alike in the dense, amorphous fog which fittingly encompasses the action of this masterpiece.

And as if these weaknesses were not enough to damn him, he is also charged with not being able to think very clearly about the political and philosophical issues around which his plays revolve. Is *Long Day's Journey Into Night* to be read as a commentary on the failure of the American Dream and the alienation of the bourgeois family? Or should it be viewed as metaphysical speculation about the nature of reality in which the four main characters practise various forms of transcendence or evasion? Both themes are present, of course, but they are denied any satisfactory elaboration by O'Neill's determined fidelity to autobiographical exactitude.

Jonathan Miller's new production of the play, transferred to London after a successful run on Broadway, appears to have been shaped by an awareness of these faults. But in

his efforts to eliminate, or at least minimize them, the director has unfortunately also sacrificed the elusive element that should make its performance a powerful and moving experience.

Once, when he was requested to abridge a text in order to make it fit the demands of a theatre's timetable, O'Neill flatly refused on the grounds that his plays weren't written with commuters in mind. Miller, on the other hand, has obligingly cut the play's running time from four hours to three. This is achieved by an adroit use of overlapping dialogue delivered at breakneck speed; and though this does have the effect of immuring the individual members of the Tyrone family in their cocoons of reminiscence and self-pity and thus adds to the play's atmosphere of overwhelming personal isolation, it also serves to lose some of O'Neill's more important lines. Mary Tyrone's crucial speech, for example, which comes as close as anything to summarizing the play's theme, is delivered as just another part of her continuous, disregarded gabble:

None of us can help the things life has done to us. They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self for ever.

In compressing and accelerating the action of the play, Miller also distorts its overall tempo, so that one initially has the feeling of a family being swept into a nihilism rather than of moving inexorably into the blackness of reality in which the four main characters practise various forms of transcendence or evasion? Both themes are present, of course, but they are denied any satisfactory elaboration by O'Neill's determined fidelity to autobiographical exactitude.

Jonathan Miller's new production of the play, transferred to London after a successful run on Broadway, appears to have been shaped by an awareness of these faults. But in

brotherly hatred, Bethel Leslie too, as Mary Tyrone, works hard in the second half of the play to overcome the effects of its frenetic opening. When she finally escapes from her intolerable situation into a morphine-induced reverie of girlish innocence and chastity, her cold detachment from the real world creates a moving image of the terrors of drug addiction.

In the midst of all this, though, James Tyrone, the failed tragedian whose early sufferings as an Irish immigrant have blighted his subsequent career, can only stand in a vacuum of bewildered incomprehension. Jack Lemmon is a fine actor who has, particularly in the films he made with Billy Wilder, created the definitive model of a certain type of contemporary, urban neurotic. The part of James Tyrone, however, demands a mixture of petty vanity and egomaniacal grandeur that even Olivier and Richardson found difficult to embrace, and which is quite beyond Jack Lemmon's compass. He manages the smaller gestures very well indeed, but without the larger, shadowy aspiration, even the illusion of tragic nobility cannot be sustained and the character loses all authority. *Long Day's Journey Into Night* was written, O'Neill tells us, in blood as well as in tears. Lemmon's performance is good enough to make one weep, but that other vital element remains sadly lacking.

Recently published plays include *Arturists and Commitments* by Dusky Hughes (176pp. Faber. Paperback, £4.95, 0 571 13778 7). *Dimple Cross* by Thomas Kilroy (79pp. Faber. Paperback, £4.50, 0 571 14660 0). Charles Péguy's *The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc*, adapted by Jenn-Paul Lupat, translated by Jeffrey Wainwright (92pp. P.N. Review/Carcant. Paperback, £5.95, 0 85635 690 5). *The Brice Robert*, King o' Scots by R. S. Silver (63pp. Edinburgh: The Smithe Society, £3.50, 0 85411 035 6).

Timepiece

Isabel Fonseca

ARTHUR MILLER
The American Clock
Cottesloe Theatre

The Depression more than anything else shaped Arthur Miller as a writer and a thinker, and in *The American Clock* he has made it the subject of a play. Inspired by Studs Terkel's *Hard Times* and incorporating autobiographical material (Miller's father lost his business in the Depression), *The American Clock* is an unexpectedly buoyant production, full of song and dance.

The main story-line charts the ruin of a well-off New York Jewish family like Miller's own. Through the stunned eyes of the family - and of the nation - Miller examines the unprecedented (and indeed "un-American") phenomenon of complete reliance on government, and again expresses his alarm. In wonderful Brooklynese, over the threat to individual freedom. (The relationship between Governments and individuals is a vital theme for Miller, as is shown by his appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1956, and more recently, by his work with PEN, on behalf of writers in prison.)

For all its personal elements, *The American Clock* more than any other Miller play aims to embrace America: urban, rural, radical and reactionary, black and white. "The main thing about the Depression", Isaac, the black proprietor of a Mississippi diner phlegmatically observes, "is that it finally hit the white people, 'cause us folks never had nothin' else."

"The confusion of the time is expressed by the immigrant grandfather who vacillates between wishing Roosevelt would be king and wanting to send his grandson to Russia to get a new start (that is until he learns about state ownership: 'The stores they own? Them bastards!') The title itself, which could refer to any of three time zones, suggests America's endemic lack of synchronicity.

Confusion is also registered in the loose construction of the play (Miller has called it a "mosaic"). In its ambitious scope - spanning the years from 1929 to 1969 - and in its fifty characters, masterfully handled by a cast of twenty. But unfortunately, the size of things, and the incessant singing diffuse the tension of the piece. It is either too noisy and crowded to be moving, or too enjoyable to be true to the subject-matter (and by the end a certain nostalgia for the Depression has been generated).

The episodic structure favours brilliance over stillness, and yet the communication of strong feeling demands something of the latter. David Schofield makes of the brevity of his four roles the virtue of immediate impact. His brilliance, like that of many of the others, is properly superficial. This points to a difficulty in Miller's "mosaic" approach. In a short scene (and especially one which draws on documentary sources), one's emotional response depends on pre-existent feelings. In other words, of course we all feel sorry for the broke and broken farmer and young men starving or driven to suicide. But such feelings do not depend on the telling, and our sympathies are not altered or enlarged.

Miller maintains his interest in time remembered as dramatized through the consciousness of one or two choric narrators. But in *The American Clock*, the tension is so low and scattered that this device for keeping the past alive seems farcical, mechanical. If the dramatic centre of the play is in memory, it would have been useful to draw out the peripheral characters and so illustrate political values, not only through documentary, but through some shred of human development. Rose, the mother, is the only part that affords this chance and in that role Sara Kestelman demonstrates her own, and Miller's proven skill in several moving scenes.

The American Clock is not about the impact of the Depression on particular people, but neither is it squarely an "issue" play, like *The Crucible*, with its oblique attack on McCarthyism - and so, with no certain target it just ticks along without immanent danger of exploding.

The triumph of Trivia

Francis Haskell

JOHN A. PINTO
The Trevi Fountain
323pp. Yale University Press, £25.
0 30003354

The Trevi Fountain has some claim to be considered the most popular eighteenth-century monument in the world. Yet when it was begun (in its present form) in 1732, connoisseurs in London, Paris and elsewhere were widely convinced that architecture in Rome (and indeed in Italy as a whole) had not only come to an end, but had been off course for several generations – corrupted by just those great masters of the Baroque to whom Nicola Salvi, its designer, was to turn for inspiration. The fountain in fact is only one of a whole series of masterpieces – chief among them the Spanish Steps – which transformed the appearance of Rome in the early and middle decades of the eighteenth century and made the city once again pre-eminent among European capitals. The apparently sudden development of great art can never be adequately explained, but this last “Roman Renaissance” is the most challenging of them all: by every rational test that one can think of it had no right to exist – and the experts have accordingly punished it for its impertinence ever since.

These men of taste who flocked to Italy during the second half of the eighteenth century and laid down the criteria by which the monuments of Rome were to be judged, treated it with condescension – at best; and although serious attention has long been paid to the achievements of Bernini, Borromini and Pietro da Cortona, the founding fathers of Roman Baroque architecture, eighteenth-century developments in the city have still been little studied. John A. Pinto's excellent monograph on the Trevi Fountain is thus very welcome.

The fascination of the study lies indeed not only in what is said about the fountain as it now is, but also in the discussion of what it replaced. Pinto is able to demonstrate that far all the unexpected thrill with which one suddenly comes across this huge marble fantasy almost hidden away behind the Corso, many of its most significant features were predetermined by conditions dating back over decades and even centuries. The source of the Aqua Virgo – a particularly fresh and clean spring – was discovered in 19 BC at Salone, a few miles outside Rome. Credit was given to a young maiden who was said to have palmed it out to the soldiers of Agrippa; by the seventeenth century a name – Trivia! – had been found for her, and in 1762 her powers of observation were commemorated in a pretty bas-relief inserted into the façade of the fountain. The water supply was to be used for the low-lying Campus

Martius, whose large-scale redevelopment was undertaken during the reign of Augustus after the area had been neglected during the period of the Republic. To a notable extent therefore the site of the fountain was already fore-ordained in antiquity, though in fact when the aqueduct was first constructed, the Aqua Virgo terminated rather nearer to the Pantheon than to its present position. As the source of the spring was only twenty-four metres above sea level, the rate of fall was necessarily low, and this radically affected the appearance of all the many fountains built for, or designed to heighten, the outlet of this extremely important supply of fresh water.

Pinto's analysis of these designs constitutes the main feature of this book. Many of the greatest Italian architects were involved in successive projects – Alberti, Bernini, Fuga and Vanvitelli among them – but difficulties of all kinds stood in the way of satisfactory completion, and the fountain remained disappointingly unimpressive long after Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers in the Piazza Navona was entralling visitors to Rome. Nevertheless, Pinto's account of these early failures makes a most important and fascinating contribution to the history of town planning and social life in the city.

In the first years of the eighteenth century the problem of what could be done to the fountain began to attract serious attention, and from then on Pinto is able to illustrate and

discuss a great number of designs. One feature turns up again and again: the incorporation into the structure of the Antonine Column (fifteen metres in height) which had been discovered in 1703. Though architects of the stature of Juvarda toyed with the notion (and Carlo Fontana had the similar idea of making use of an obelisk), the results, had they been carried out, would surely have been most unhappy: in all the existing drawings towering verticals seem to rise indifferent to, and detached from, the water flowing into basins so far below their bases. The effects (on paper) resemble what can only be called dehydrated versions of Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers, which naturally haunted the imaginations of subsequent architects. Some designers did conceive of a horizontal wall fountain, but the private building interests of the princely families of Rome usually stood in the way of anything on the impressive scale desired. Indeed, the construction between 1728 and 1730 of a new façade for the Palazzo Poli, dominating the Piazza di Trevi, seemed likely to confine any new fountain to no wider a surface than that occupied by the existing, unsatisfactory structure, for this now became hemmed in by the two bays of the palace. However, as so often in Rome, the rivalries of successive popes played a decisive part in transforming what appeared to be an insoluble problem. In 1732 Clement XII (Corsini), only too pleased to be able to thwart the ostentatious ambitions of his prede-

cessors and their favourites, authorized the cloaking of the whole façade by the new fountain that he had in mind. This luck played a part in promoting the brilliant wall design suggested by Nicola Salvi, who won the competition for a replacement for the undistinguished structure that had been in place for nearly a hundred years.

Salvi enjoyed no fame or powerful protection at the time, and unfortunately we know very little indeed of the circumstances behind his victory. The names of only a few of the competitors are recorded, and above all we know nothing of the judges or of how they reached their decision. Even Pinto's meticulous researches have not been able to reveal much, and this important gap in what is otherwise a well-documented and very well-told story is the only real disappointment in his book – for him, presumably, as much as for us. But, in the light of Salvi's plans (which continued to be carried out faithfully enough even after his death) we can only applaud the judgement of these anonymous arbiters of taste – a taste which was probably superior to that to be found anywhere else in Europe at the time. The extended horizontal façade which (literally) covers the whole of the recently completed façade of Palazzo Poli and the almost arrogant projection of the sculptural decorations deep into the miniature piazza have the effect of making the huge figure of Oceanus, who dominates his entourage of Tritons and mermaid horses, fit perfectly into the structure as a whole – despite the fact that he is nineteen feet high (taller than the Quirinal Horse Tamed). Moreover the cascades of water which rush and roar over the platform of boulders and rocks into the wide basin below triumphantly avoid the monotony potentially posed by the low fall which seems to have been inherent in the projects of almost all earlier architects, including those of the highest distinction.

Salvi himself was not, of course, an architect of the greatest intellect or imagination (his “programme” for the fountain is distinctly prosaic and pedantic) – nor were all the sculptors working for him of outstanding originality – and Pinto can provide convincing precedents for most of the features we enjoy in the fountain. Yet the Fontana di Trevi provides a supreme example of something that professional art historians often forget: the genuine creative value of intelligent eclecticism deployed within a rich tradition; and, in any case, part of its charm comes from that very confusion of styles (“Baroque”, “Rococo”, “Neo-classicism”) and of opposing principles (reason and fantasy) which has worried so many scholars, including Pinto, anxious to “place” the work within the accepted categories of eighteenth-century developments. This well-produced and well-illustrated book is thus able to throw important light on a very great deal more than is indicated in its title.



A Triton of the Trevi Fountain, a detail from a photograph in the book reviewed here.

Constructive suggestions

J. B. Bury

PIETRO CATANEO, GIACOMO BAROZZI DA VIGNOLA, ALVISE CORNARO, FRANCESCO GIORGI, CLAUDIO TOLOMEI, GIANGIORGIO TRISSINO and GIORGIO VASARI
Scritti di architettura
Edited by Elena Bassi, Maria Walcher Casotti and others
387pp. Milan: Polifilo. L.140,000.

Over the past thirty years the celebrated architectural treatises of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, essential reference works for students of Renaissance and Baroque architecture, have become increasingly hard to find. Although reprint firms, notably Gregg International and Benjamin Blom, of New York, in the 1960s, and more recently Arnoldo Forni, of Bologna, have issued facsimiles of a number of titles, including Cesariano's *Vitruvius* and the treatises of Serlio, Palladio, Cataneo, Palladio, Philibert Delorme, Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau and Scamozzi, they have failed in most cases to provide even the briefest introduction, let alone a bibliography, notes or an index. Ediciones Albatros, of Valencia, and Edi-

zioni Il Polifilo, of Milan, have approached the task in a more serious manner. Albatros has issued good quality facsimiles of Spanish sixteenth and seventeenth century architectural books with excellent introductions by leading scholars. Il Polifilo have gone further, completely reprinting the texts and providing a full critical apparatus of notes, bibliographies and indexes as well as scholarly introductions. The book under review is the latest of Il Polifilo's Trattati di Architettura series. The earlier volumes are L. B. Alberti's *De re aedificatoria* (in the original Latin with a literal Italian translation superseding Bartoli's of 1550), the treatises of Filarete, Francesco di Giorgio, Palladio and Guarini, and a volume of writings on architecture and proportion by Francesco Colonna, Luca Padoli and Leonardo da Vinci; as well as reprints of Cesariano's *Vitruvius* and Domenico Fontana's *Trattato dell'obelisco e le fabbriche di Sisto V*. All these works have been admirably edited by Italian scholars of international reputation, handsomely printed and well-produced.

The latest volume, mainly devoted to the treatises of Vignola and Pietro Cataneo, and with forty-six plates, maintains the high standard set by its predecessors. The editor of the

former treatise, Maria Walcher Casotti, has happily chosen to reprint the *editio princeps* (1562) of the famous *Cinque ordini* in its first state, of which only two copies survive. In addition to her Introduction she has provided a valuable bibliographical article which incorporates an astonishing list of 514 editions of the *Cinque ordini* printed between 1562 and 1974.

The Pietro Cataneo text chosen by its editor, Elena Bassi, for reproduction is that of the second edition (1567). This is understandable, since the first edition (1554), of four books, was considerably amended by Cataneo, and a further four books were added. Nevertheless it is a pity that the several passages occurring in the first edition but omitted from the second have only been briefly summarized in the notes. Cataneo's *Architettura* is remarkable in the history of architectural treatises for being one of the first of a new “universal” genre covering both civil and military architecture. Palladio tells us in his *Quattro libri* (1570) that he intended to write on military architecture, but in the event failed to do so. As a consequence Cataneo's only “universal” successor was Vincenzo Scamozzi, whose *Architettura*, mainly written in the 1590s, came out in 1615. As is well known, the second half of the sixteenth century witnessed the divergence along

separate paths of the professions of civil architect and military engineer, previously often performed by a single individual with impressive versatility. Yet it was paradoxically in that same period that the fashion briefly prevailed for treatises which aimed to characterize fortification as a branch of “universal” architecture. Instead of as a branch of applied science. This ambitious effort, pioneered in Italy by Cataneo, to combine together within one discipline two ultimately incompatible subjects, was not effectively discontinued until the seventeenth century.

Cataneo's *Architettura* did not achieve the popularity of the great civil architectural treatises of Serlio, Palladio or Scamozzi; nor of such treatises on fortification as those of Girolamo Cataneo, Errard de Bar-le-duc, or Antoine de Ville. After the 1567 edition it was not, as Professor Bassi reminds us, printed again. But she might have added that it was not forgotten, being often referred to, and praised, both inside and outside Italy.

Edizioni Il Polifilo, and the scholars who have edited Vignola, Cataneo and the other texts deserve the highest praise for a publication which, together with its predecessors, should be in the library of every architectural historian who can afford them.

Problems chiefly descriptive

P. N. Furbank

DANIELE DEL GIUDICE
Atlante occidentale
152pp. Turin: Einaudi. L.16,000.
8806582224

There have been novels, by Italo Calvino and others, about the problem of narration, and it was as such that Calvino praised Daniele del Giudice's first novel, *Lo stadio di Wimbledon*. So why not a novel about description? For it is a profound puzzle what one means by the term “description”. The only things that spring to mind as ingredients of a description are enumeration and comparison (all adjectives belong to one or the other). But enumeration in some contexts figures as almost the opposite of a description (“I didn't ask you for an enumeration, I asked you for a description”), or on the other hand comparison, or saying what the thing to be described is “like”, but this raises the spectre of infinite regression. (If the way to describe A is to say it is like B, and the way to describe B is to say it is like C, description appears to be an endless series of postponements.)

Del Giudice's *Atlante occidentale* (Atlas of the West) turns precisely on this issue. It runs somewhat thus. Brahe, a young Italian physicist, who is at work on a front-line experiment in fundamental physics at the great proton accelerator near Geneva (a ring-like underground structure thirty kilometres in length), casually encounters Ira Epstein, a middle-aged German novelist, through their common hobby of aviation. Epstein, who is currently a candidate for the Nobel prize, is conducting an experiment also. He believes himself to have explored all available forms of writing, and always with one aim in mind: that writing and telling stories should become totally “transparent” to him, even in the act of writing. This

means that it is time for him to stop writing. From now on he means to “see” stories (in some sort of instantaneous and non-narrative manner) and simultaneously to give up “life”, of which he has lived enough, in favour of “the present”.

Epstein engineers a friendship with Brahe, the course of which constitutes the experiment, or alternatively the story of the present novel, and the basis of which is a curious sympathy they discover in their way of attending to the world. What Brahe first finds impressive and attractive in Epstein is his special rapport with objects, for instance his extraordinary deftness in unstopping a beer-bottle; and later Epstein explains that a proper kind of attention to mass-produced objects and utensils (such as an electric razor or a chair) represents for him a form of friendship, an entering into human relations with their designer. The friendship between Brahe and Epstein themselves, in its gingerly progress, is presented as above all else an exchange of “attentions” or attention.

Brahe meditates:

“How does one describe subatomic reactions, when by definition they resemble nothing else?” Text-books of popular science always begin “Imagine a... imagine a quartered orange, a sandwich, a tennis-ball, and what this means is, “Imagine something different from what is the case, that is to say something wrong.”

A strange law of conservation in imagination and perception is always striving to restore things to the way they were before. Still, for all that, a scientist must try to explain: though when Epstein gets Brahe to explain things about his work, his attentiveness is so acute that it somehow seems as if he understood it all already. One day, as they are alone in the skies, following in their aeroplane the curve of the nuclear “ring” beneath them, Epstein challenges Brahe: “Well, what about your experiment?” Brahe gropes for helpful analogies, but Epstein stops him: “No, not like that, not like

Why should everything you tell me have to come enmeshed with a twin?” Brahe tries, again, this time with more success; but as he talks, the two lean closer together, and the roar of the engine envelops them, so no third person could have heard what was said. So extreme an isolation is the fitting *mise-en-scène*, we are to understand, for someone trying to describe without recourse to similes.

Later in the story it is Brahe's turn to challenge Epstein, the man of words. To honour Epstein, the municipality of Geneva has put on a fireworks display, and after it, as Brahe and he are sitting together in the dark, Brahe asks Epstein what he means by “seeing” – for example, what did he “see” during the fireworks? Epstein responds (and this time we are allowed to overhear) with a lengthy chemical, technological and geometrical account of the display, and in this bravura performance it appears to us, at first hearing, that he is freely indulging in similes. Then, of course, it

downs on us that they are not similes after all, for a pyrotechnic display is itself a matter of simulating all sorts of objects (trees, flowers and faces), in terms of light. Epstein reflects on the curious relation of light to description: all the rest of the physical world can be enumerated by means of nouns and verbs, but the only part of speech with which light seems to have an affinity is adjectives, like “pallid” or “cold” or “flickering”.

The scanty events of the story draw to a denouement soon after this. Brahe's nuclear experiment proves successful, demonstrating a radical symmetry in natural processes and a new unifying law; and, under an overpowering impulse, he rushes across the city in his car to find Epstein, only to discover that his friend, having won the Nobel prize, is leaving the country. An oddly exciting “thriller” climax ensues (reminding me, though in reverse, of the scene in the Buñuel film, where Christ is hurrying across country to Santiago, to be in time to greet his pilgrims). Epstein is in fact

at the railway station, killing time as he waits for his train by studying a model of Geneva, complete with toy electric trains; and in his mind's eye, as he stands there, he prophetically “sees” a multitude of things about Brahe – sees him among his fellow-physicists, sees him in bed with Epstein's secretary-assistant Gilda, sees him approaching through the streets of Geneva. “And now?” asks the breathless Brahe, on arrival. “Now another story will need to begin.” “And what about this one?” “This one is finished.” “Will anyone write it down?” “I don't know, I think not. The important thing was not to write it but to have a feeling about it [*provare un sentimento*].”

Epstein's complaint against similes cannot help reminding us of “modernist” literary theory and of Ezra Pound's aggrieved complaint against “cette poésie farcie de ‘comme’”. All the same, it is not for nothing that del Giudice invokes science, and one suspects a play or pun upon that tired old phrase, “the experimental novel”.

How shall we read *Atlante occidentale*? It pulsates with symmetries and parallels, so that almost any topic touched upon – whether vintage aircraft, or lights switched on and off, or attention and distraction, or Geneva's pacifism – is dense with reverberations; yet prudence suggests that it is better not to try to explain it in terms of allegory or symbolism – for what are they but reduplications of the kind Epstein complains of? (Thus, though Epstein, with his visionary abilities and manipulative proclivities, evidently takes many of the liberties of a fictional narrator, we must not conclude that he “stands for” the art of narration.) So how shall we know when we may stop parallel-hunting and decide that we have read the novel? In such cases in mathematics there might be an exact answer, in the form of an elegant equation; and one senses that this is a possibility that, in this very punning and attractive novel, playfully anyway, del Giudice might like us to entertain.

Parma and the past

Filippo Donini

ATTILIO BERTOLUCCI
Lacamera da letto
266pp. Milan: Garzanti. L.20,000.

Attilio Bertolucci, a poet whose debut in the early 1930s was encouraged by Montale, started in 1956 on a sort of verse chronicle in which he narrates the story of his family from the time of Napoleon down to 1933. It is not a systematic, chronological story, but rather a series of flashes illuminating in well-chosen detail particular episodes in the lives of his grandfather and mother, and in his own adolescence. How the grandfather, a prosperous gentleman farmer on the rich plain near Parma, consented to the wedding of his favourite daughter to a man from the Apennines, the descendant of sturdy horsemen who had come long before from Tuscany; how the young couple suffered the death of three children before giving birth to the poet and his brother; how his mother used to drive her buggy across country; how the grandfather became ill and died; and then the death of a beloved uncle, the poet's unhappy years at school and his first emotions and pleasures in the discovery of the countryside, the city of Parma and finally poetry and love: these are the subjects of the three parts, divided into twenty-nine chapters, of *La camera da letto*.

Italian critics have been at a loss to classify this strange and delightful work. Is it a novel in verse, poetical autobiography or a sort of *chanson de geste*? Pietro Citati has compared it to Goethe's *Lehrjahre*; G. Barberi Squarotti has defined it as a “romanzo pascoliano” (a novel à la Pascoli) because of the continuous presence and love of the countryside. But what matters is that *La camera da letto* reads exceedingly well and in places the splendour of its poetry is both dazzling and enrapturing. The horseman riding down from the hills; the evocation of an unknown baby sister; the joyous driving of the young mother whose cheeks are like the flowers of the magnolia; the child going to school for the first time; the deaths of both the grand-

father and the uncle; the shyness and trepidation of the young man in love; these are passages of great beauty. But more than any particular episode, what lingers in the memory is an intimation of the sacredness of the family and of its source and centre, the bedroom (*la camera da letto*), together with an enchanting, mysterious feeling of the permanence of the past. One senses that Bertolucci has studied his Proust and his Eliot.

In the first part of the poem, which deals mostly with events in the family before the author's birth, the metre – as if to underline the ancestral quality of the subject – is the traditional hendecasyllabic line of the great Italian narrative poems, interspersed with shorter lines, mainly heptasyllabic. The second and third parts, however, dealing with more recent events, consist of longer lines imitating roughly the classical hexameter, but without any strict regularity, so that the impression is rather of a derivation from Whitman (a self-portrait of the author as a young man “hungry from Maeterlinck and Whitman in pocket editions” comes as no surprise) or from the more colloquial parts of Eliot's *Four Quartets*. But here, too, the longer lines are interrupted by shorter, or by very short ones, so that no effect of monotony can arise.

Two other protagonists command our attention in the poem: the city of Parma and the countryside round about it. The charm of that small capital which to Stendhal offered an image of political intrigue and of love affairs, and which Pascoli described as a sort of microcosm of Europe, comes out vividly in Bertolucci's beautiful lines, as he describes its streets, its palaces, its domes, its river, and even its street-cars. But his love of the city extends also to its countryside. On every page a tree, a field, a flower, a particular view, the different colours and sounds of each hour of the day and night are described with tender affection and an extraordinary power of evocation; while the country people recall the figures of the Months in Parma's superb Baptistery; one cannot read Bertolucci without thinking of them, nor in future will one be able to look at them without being reminded of his poem.

After the violence

Anna Laura Lepschy

MARIO RIGONI STERN
L'anno della vittoria
159pp. Turin: Einaudi. L.10,000.
8806589913

Mario Rigoni Stern made his name in 1953 with *Il sergente della neve*, one of the most striking Italian novels on the theme of the Second World War. In the form of an autobiographical memoir, it follows the vicissitudes of a group of *alpini* in the 1942-3 retreat from Russia. The recurring question, asked by one of the narrator's Brescian companions: “Sergeantmagli, ghe rivarem a bita?” (Sergeant-major, will we get back to our hut?), can also be taken as the leitmotif of Rigoni Stern's subsequent books: *Quota Albinia* (1971) and *Ritorno sul Don* (1973), as well as of his *Storia di Thule* (1978), which goes back to the period between the unification of Italy and the First World War. The herdsman Tönle, driven into exile after a brush with the police, succeeds in secretly making his way home every winter to the *alpiamo*, the upland plain of Asiago (Rigoni Stern's own part of the Veneto), to which he can only make a definitive return as an old man at the end of the war. *L'anno della vittoria*, in which old Tönle makes a fleeting reappearance, is the sequel to the *Storia di Tönle*.

The return home in this case is the return, in 1918, to the *alpiamo* village which had been abandoned and destroyed during the war, and which the fourteen-year-old protagonist Matteo, his family and their fellow refugees set about rebuilding, in an attempt to recapture their past.

Rigoni Stern conveys the violence which had been wrought not only on the village but also on the landscape around it. Slowly the land is prepared for cultivation once again, a communal oven is reopened, a flock of mountain sheep is bought, the school is rebuilt and the villagers find work in nearby sand quarries and forests. As the village is repopulated the old customs reappear and festivals are once more celebrated; but a new concern is also felt:

young Mosé Tripp returns from Turin bringing news of Gramsci and his *Ordine nuovo* as well as intimations of socialist revolution. As election time approaches, the new political consciousness finds expression in clashes between fascists and socialists, and these result in further deaths. But in spite of hints of a new threat to the stability of the village the novel ends optimistically, and the “victory” of the title is no longer in doubt; the solidarity and determination of the villagers have been rewarded by the rebirth of their community and the new year is heralded by the birth of another child for Matteo's parents, the first new life in the rebuilt village.

Rigoni Stern is never sentimental; his style is sparing and his images concrete. He evokes the rhythms of physical labour on the land, of the passing of time. He conveys, through skilful use of standard Italian, the contrast between the authenticity of the dialect spoken by the people and the artificiality and confusion of bureaucratic jargon.

The series of minuscule (12x17 cms) paperback originals and reprints “La memoria”, published by Sellerio, Via Siracusa 50, Palermo, has now reached over 100 volumes; among them are seven short works by Leonardo Sciascia: *Dalle parti degli infedeli*, L.2,500. *Att relative alla morte di Raymond Roussel*, L.2,500. *Kermesse*, L.3,000. *La sentenza memorabile*, L.2,500. *Cronache*, L.5,000. *Per un ritratto dello scrittore da giovane*, L.5,000, and *L'affaire Moro*, L.5,000. (This was written in 1978 and first published in *La civiltà perfezionista*. Sciascia was a member of the parliamentary investigative committee of “l'Inferno” and published together with this first edition of the essay in the final report, presented to the Commission and the Lower House, by Sciascia and a minority of the members of the Commission.)

Also in the series are Alberto Moravia's *Coma e briganti*, L.2,500, Alessandro Manzoni's *Storia della Colonna infame*, L.5,000, Gesualdo Bufalino's *Museo d'ombre*, L.4,000, as well as his earlier *Diceria dell'inizio*, L.6,000 and Alfredo Panzini's *Grammatica italiana*, L.5,000.

Model prisoners

D. J. Enright

RICHARD WILEY
Soldiers in Hiding
199pp. Chatto and Windus, £9.95.
0170131365

Teddy Maki has his own television programme, the "Original Amateur Hour". When it began in the early 1950s it featured serious acts, but now it resembles something dug up by Clive James to make British viewers feel superior: contestants win by drinking water through their noses or farting a tune. Maki, who speaks perfect English, takes a mean, similarly cynical pleasure in misdirecting American tourists in Tokyo.

He and his friend Jimmy Yamamoto were Americans, Los Angeles Japanese, who happened to be in Japan, playing in a band, when war broke out. Both of them fell in love with Kazuko, sister of their local agent, Ike, and Jimmy married her. *Pacte de nixen*, they joined the Japanese army, and found themselves in the Philippines, guarding American prisoners. Jimmy refused to shoot an officer who had outraged Major Nakamura by his incorrect attitude — he showed himself insufficiently defeated — and was thereupon shot by the major. When Maki was ordered in turn to shoot the American, he complied. Discharged, he found his way to Tokyo and married Kazuko — an admirable, unromanticized figure — who bore a son, ostensibly his, actually Jimmy's. Except for his devotion to the child, named Milo, Maki is a ghost, estranged, belonging nowhere, "like a man on a rotisserie turning evenly but thoughtlessly through time". He cannot forget that he was able to kill where Jimmy preferred to die.

Thirty years after his supposed death in the jungle, Ike returns, having posed as a Filipino, settled in Manila, even married there. Such things did happen. With Milo, now a pop star, and Ike, Maki plans an act of revenge: to have ex-Major Nakamura on his show, "the amateur of that particular hour". On Christmas Day — an American irony, this — they and a camera crew, all dressed in miscellaneous army uniforms from the studio wardrobe, interview

Nakamura in a warehouse which the major, now a pharmacist, has turned into a theatre. In a weird climax which avoids stagnancy by the haplazzardness of its events, they don Noh masks and recite lines from an old play. The shooting in the Philippines is very nearly reenacted. For Nakamura is just a mad old man. "All soldiers die" is the conclusion; "None of them are guilty." This — after all those years — is no sentimental cop-out. Surely no one should suffer at the same time both the pangs of conscience and the pains of age. For what life is left to him, Maki is released from his guilt, more or less needed. Now he will help lost foreigners to find their way.

Précis makes the story sound melodramatic; in its telling the novel is controlled and sombre, unportunately thoughtful, persuasively low-key. Traces of awkwardness in the writing, as if it were a painstaking translation, add to the impression of honesty; and incidents are the more effective in that "local colour" is applied with a light brush. During a fire raid the neighbours take water from a public bathhouse; never mind the tatami, the matting, the owner tells them, "and quickly the tatami was soaked and torn, the heels of street shoes turning its straight straw lines into twisted sores, like the blooms of an awful flower". A nearby temple is on fire, and the huge image of the Buddha changes its expression into one of faint surprise as it begins to melt; the faces of the dead monks have no expression, show no surprise.

After Hiroshima, Maki knows there won't be much trouble, the Japanese will surprise the Americans by being model prisoners: "That had been Major Nakamura's point." And when the Emperor, on the radio, announces the surrender to his subjects, what is extraordinary is not what the Emperor says but the fact that he is speaking. "Our losses were incalculable", Maki reflects, whole cities wiped out, but what is interesting is that now they are crying for the greatest loss of all, "the virginity of the Emperor's voice".

This first novel has a dignity, a decency and a humanity so rare in contemporary fiction as to make one wish for more resounding terms of commendation. It takes the nominally exotic and, without demeaning it, without straining after programmatic effects, reveals it as universally authentic.

Playing the game

Peter Reading

ROGER MOSS
The Game of the Pink Pagoda
269pp. Collins, £10.95.
00022979X

"It is said that the winning tale is always the one that keeps a balance between what is new and different and what is familiar, between what is personal to the teller and what is shared by all." This is a winning sequence of tales. Roger Moss manipulates archetypal areas of English fictional topography and a handful of stereotype *dramatis personae* to produce a profoundly impressive series of existential possibilities.

Introductory sections delineate familiar scenes (the Pieces) and characters (the Players). There's the English country house, with, in its grounds, the quasi-oriental folly of the tulle, the Game Wood, the Burned-out Church, the adjacent Quarries. Players include the Owner of the Big House, the penniless Owner of the Quarries, the Beautiful Woman, the Charred Body in the Burned-out Church, the enigmatic Figure in the Grounds, you the Reader. The Pieces are constants; giving cohesion to the alternative versions of events unfolding about them. Similarly, the participants retain a fixity which unifies their permutations of slightly altered age, behaviour, name and title. Moss himself emerges as the most virtuous player. In an elaborate passageway of twenty-six variants, he employs as many genres to portray ambition, intrigue, mystery, death — the gamos of existence — around a motif of the Pink Pagoda. What is remarkable is his assurance in each disparate style, and the subtle metamorphoses that occur in repetition.

Readers may feel that a part of their Clarendon Press

stylistic recognition. Oscar Wilde, pulp sleuth thriller, epistolary narrative, creation myth, Agatha Christie, self-fi, boys' comic adventure yarn, fairy story and fable are all allusive presences. So is P. G. Wodehouse — a Woosteresque hero in one chapter venerates his manservant, Jova: "You've done what you always do, old friend. Like the *deus ex machina* in a Greek play, you descended at the psychological moment and booted me niftily from catastrophe into funville. Rather well done." Elsewhere, a very funny bit of bogus Beckett teatons striving towards the Pagoda goal:

this voice, only friend I have in the world, save the swans creaking painfully upriver on the waterline, always on their last flight I like to think, save them and the old sore place in my cheek my tongue always searches out for company . . . and I, the poor soul stuck in the paradox, going left tonight, right to left, up and down the path, carving my furrow, boisterously they call it in some circles . . .

All this parody, pastiche and cliché, however, is skillfully marshalled to enrich the underlying theme of Quest. A Kafka-like impossibility of arrival is implicit, and the humorous, comic, melodramatic elements both offset and make more resonant a rumination, visionary, neo-mystical voice — which seeks to approach the imponderable, not quite-graspable instant by way of a Game "where nothing more than an approach is permissible".

As the publishers remark, this novel defies classification; the author, though, approaches a definition of intent — "It is the Player's duty to play the Game, not by turning his back on the world, but by using every opportunity that the Rules of the Game allow to increase the bounds of delight within the world."

A Colloquium to mark the centenary of the birth of Clint Stapleton will be held at the University of Liverpool from September 26 to 28.

The psalmist's voice

Craig Brown

NICHOLAS MOSLEY
Judith
297pp. Secker and Warburg, £11.95.
043628832

Having completed his extraordinary two-volume biography of his father Oswald, Nicholas Mosley has returned to his planned seven-volume series of novels. *Judith* is the fourth in the series. It reveals many of the same preoccupations that made the father-and-son biography so tense, so humane and ultimately so moving.

The father came to excuse evil as a possible force for good; as a politician and an orator, he became infatuated by the power of words and of acting; he believed that the ease with which speech and image could be controlled was emblematic of the larger control the individual could gain over his own destiny and the destiny of others. Meanwhile, the son remained sceptical. In *Judith*, this scepticism has deepened towards mysticism. Question marks hold the narratives up like curtain-rings. By pulling away ideas of reality, Mosley seeks to view something grander and more far-reaching. One of the reasons that his novels are seen as "experimental" is that their eventual pursuit is out of kilter with others. Characterization — if characterization is the close delineation of the things that make people different — is virtually non-existent. Narrative, here, is self-conscious, jerky, repetitive, hard to follow, often just a demonstration of the protagonists' need for a narrative. "What falsifications result from the need for a story?" asks Judith, who is telling her tale in letters to three characters from Mosley's earlier *Catastrophe Practice*. With their repetitions, their questions, their obsession with symbols, their acknowledgment of a force beyond and inaccessible to words, Mosley's books often seem closer to psalms than to novels. "Of course the language is difficult. It has to circle itself: at the centre there is silence." Few novelists are so assured by their lack of assurance.

Judith is an ex-actress who is searching for a reality beyond her own reality by entering disparate contemporary worlds:

Of course you can fix things, and you will succeed in time: you have to do this, in fact, in order to stay alive. But if you're clever enough for this, then you know that it isn't reality. Reality is something beyond yourself: if it's not, what's the point? But it's where all meaning lives, and where all joy lives, and where all love lives: and don't you forget it.

Intrusive echoes

Patricia Craig

ELIZABETH JOLLEY
The Well
176pp. Viking, £9.95.
067081033

"Ding dong bell", goes the nursery rhyme, "pussy is in the well." A jazzed-up version of these lines is sung, at the start of Elizabeth Jolley's striking new novel, by an Australian opban named Katherine, driving home from a party at a hotel, at which she has distinguished herself by dancing expressively. Katherine is accompanied, on the journey home, by her friend and benefactor Miss Hester Horper, with whom she lives in an old stone shepherd's cottage in the bush. The truck, a Toyota with kangaroo bar attached, is one of Miss Harper's extravagant recent purchases, and Katherine, an unqualified driver, is driving it incautiously, so incautiously in fact that she cannot avoid something which comes at them suddenly on a usually deserted track. "It's not a roo, Katherine," says Miss Harper, having got out to investigate, "it's not a roo."

This incident, which is at the centre of *The Well*, is recounted twice, once in the opening pages and then again in its proper place in the sequence of events; and when the book ends Miss Harper is about to deliver another version to a group of neighbouring children who are clamouring for a story. The story is the important thing, along with the person who understands the crucial experiences. This literary principle is unfolded to Hester Harper, in the all-purpose story which she frequently, by a writer's temporarily at loss for a character, an intruder, who is needed to bring about a particular dramatic end, introducing discord into a relationship. This is a moment of playful, self-

Of course you can fix things, and you will succeed in time: you have to do this, in fact, in order to stay alive. But if you're clever enough for this, then you know that it isn't reality. Reality is something beyond yourself: if it's not, what's the point? But it's where all meaning lives, and where all joy lives, and where all love lives: and don't you forget it.

Thus Professor Ackerman, a cyberneticist, guides her in her quest. For all its spiritual concerns, the novel operates within solid contemporary worlds: from a *Private Eye* parody ("wriggling like fish-bait in a tin") to an ashram in India, to the perimeters of an American airbase in Suffolk. It is the dislocation between the commonplace and what lies behind the commonplace — both in what is described and the words used to describe it — that makes the book so appealing. Mosley's usual technique of dialogue (I thought: I said: I thought I might say) is used, and his confident and overt distillations of truth (rather more Victorian than experimental) are nicely saved from banality or sermonizing by the eccentricity of their means of expression. Even when pursuing his themes of free-will, the need to act, and the attraction of pessimism, Mosley can be both charming and funny: "Of course Red Riding Hood knew her grandmother was a wolf, why else would she have gone to visit her?"

In Mosley's much earlier novel *Impossible Object*, a series of interlocking short stories in which the characters were now central, now peripheral, now observers, now observed, he began to play with Kleist's notion that human beings are never at ease because they are split between being doers and being observed of what they are doing. In this (so far unnamed) series, he is using the same pattern, though on a broader scale, to hint at something richer: the possibilities of salvation through this weasel. "If, inside the theatre of memory, you have become yourself one of the figures that pop up at windows, what is it that you might see when you look out?" Switching perspective from one book to another, from one character to another, from a watchtower to a three-eyed sheep, from the Bible to a television flicker-switch, from the immediate to the eternal and back again, Nicholas Mosley is in the midst of constructing an answer as tricky and uneven as holy, as powerful and as old-fashioned as prayer.

In his torship's prosperity Sir Fulke Greville, Lord Brooks, was his great friend and acquaintance; but who he was in disgrace and want, he was so unworthy as to forbid his butler to let him have any more small beer, which he had often sent for, his stomach being ailed, and the small beer of Grynes Lane not liking his palate.

An even more damning view of Greville's capacity for friendship comes from an earlier letter, of 1588, in which Thomas Fowler says of him, "I never trusted him with a word of my mind or thought". Greville's fame as a patron and his assiduous courtship of those in power are well known; but who were his friends? "I began this work", he says at the end of his account of Sidney, "to entertain and instruct myself; there is something in the work that suggests that this was not just an empty formula."

John Gouws's long-awaited edition, *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville*, happily coincides in its publication with the quatercentenary of Sidney's death. In addition to Greville's life of Sidney, Gouws has edited the unfinished and rather puzzling *A Letter to an Honorable Lady*. This may have been written for an identifiable and unhappy married woman — Gouws is willing to accept that she could have been Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, but does not press the claim. The *Letter* could simply be a formal address or exercise composed with no specific recipient in mind: Greville's inability or unwillingness to complete it leaves its literary status unclear. Again, the question of the work's audience leaves the reader with an uncomfortable feeling that Gravillamay not have thought that the *Letter* would have had any readers.

The choice of copy-text for the *Letter* is relatively straightforward. The version which is included in Greville's posthumous *Certain Learned and Elegant Works* of 1633 seems to have been taken from a lost transcript of the work in the Warwick Castle manuscript which is now in the British Library. This contains corrections in Greville's own hand, Gouws prints a diplomatic text taken from the manuscript with a few emendations of a minor sort from 1633. A random check of his text against

where does the emphasis in its dedication lie to Greville and his works or to Sidney? The *Dedication* to Sidney certainly gives the reader a sense of what Greville is like as a writer but his own life and personality remain obscured. In his life of Greville, Horace Wapole tried to get round this mysteriousness, even excused his own bitterly critical concentration on Sidney by maintaining that "writing his life is writing Sir Fulke Greville's". Even if this were convincing, Greville's own selectivity in the *Dedication* is sometimes arresting. He has something to say about the composite *Arcadia* of 1593 but nothing about either the *Old* or

Enigmatic relations

H. R. Woudhuysen

JOHN GOUWS (Editor)
The Prose Works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooks
179pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press, £40.
0198127464

There is something very odd about Fulke Greville. It is not just his brittle and often harsh literary style, which leaves his meaning unclear, nor his extraordinary and — finally stabbed by a discontented servant who had just done up Greville's breeches as he was "coming from stool" — nor his wifeless accumulation of vast fortunes and estates, that produces a feeling of uneasiness about him. It is as if Greville, contemptuous of the world and smugly terrified of God, forced himself to engage in friendships, yet all the while nurtured an overwhelming uneasiness and insecurity about the complementary demands of loyalty and affectionate respect.

At the very end of his life of Sidney, Greville asks the reader to "use it freely, [and] judge honorably of my friend and moderately of me, which is all the return that out of this barren stock can be desired or expected". The status and dates of friendship crop up in many contexts with Greville, most famously on his tomb which he had inscribed "FULKE GREVILLE / SERVANT TO QUEEN ELIZABETH / COUNCILLOR TO KING JAMES I AND FRIEND TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY". The title-page of the 1632 printing of *The Life* picks up the same theme, describing it as "Written by Sir Fulke Greville Knight, Lord Brooks, a Servant to Queen Elizabeth, and his Companion & Friend". The gossip surrounding Greville constantly reverts to the same subject: the Restoration historian David Lloyd (who also rather mysteriously claimed that Greville was Shakespeare's and Ben Jonson's master) reports that "his mornings were devoted to his Books, his afternoons to his knowing Friends, his nights to his debonaire Acquaintance". Lloyd is usually dismissed as an unreliable fabricator, but one would dearly like to know what he meant here. Aubrey tells a story in his life of Bacon that

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the manuscript reveals one or two errors and inaccuracies.

The life of Sidney presents a more challenging problem. The work was not published until 1632, when it appeared under the title of *The Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney*. It was dedicated to the Countess of Sunderland, Algernon Sidney's sister and Waller's "Sacharissa", by P. B., who has not been identified. The publisher was Henry Seile but its printer remains unknown. In addition to 1632 three manuscripts of the work survive: one at Trinity College, Cambridge, which the work's previous editors, Grosart and Nowell Smith, knew of; one in Shrewsbury Public Library, first described in 1954; and one privately owned by Bent Juel-Jensen in Oxford. Gouws argues that the Juel-Jensen and Shrewsbury manuscripts comprise one early version of the work, which was revised by Greville into a state represented by the Trinity manuscript and then further revised to the form witnessed by the edition of 1632. The revisions are not in themselves immediately striking, but they would repay close examination for what they would reveal about how Greville worked and reworked his writings. Rejecting an old-spelling edition, Gouws prints a carefully modernized and repunctuated text of 1632 and lists all the variants from the manuscripts. The accuracy of the text Gouws prints appears exemplary. He has chosen, however, not to retain the work's title from 1632, but to follow the only other title it has been given, that in the Trinity manuscript, so that he proposes it should now be known as *A Dedication to Sir Philip Sidney*. This is not an altogether happy decision. What sort of dedication it is remains unclear. A glossary and index, a brief introduction and a detailed commentary add to the usefulness of this edition.

Gouws dates the bulk of the composition of the *Dedication* to 1612-14, a couple of years later than most other scholars, and he rejects the understandable desire to see it as an overtly political attack on James I and the government of the day. He is, however, prepared to accept that the earliest version of the *Dedication*, which has not survived, was almost exclusively devoted to Sidney himself and probably omitted Chapters Fourteen to Seventeen. They drew on a manuscript of Camden's *Annals*, and concentrated their attention on the Earl of Essex and Queen Elizabeth. Gouws also proposes that the work concluded with what we now read as Chapter Eighteen — a brief consideration of Greville's own works.

The rest of the *Dedication*, with the possible exception of most of Chapters Eight to Ten, which deal with the state of European politics and the possibilities of colonial expansion in the 1580s, is solely concerned with Sidney. Yet the *Dedication* is one of those difficult works that however many times you read it you are never quite sure what it is actually about. Joan Rees called it a work of "political hagiography" and Gouws sees it as "biographical panegyric" yoked to civil history. The work as we have it suffers further from the need to look at it from at least three different perspectives. First, from the point of view of the events of the 1570s and 80s which are Greville's ostensible subject-matter; then from the first two decades of the seventeenth century when Greville was writing; and finally from the point of view of the 1630s, when the *Dedication* was first published, three years before the 1635 edition of Sidney's works. This contained an interesting life of him which has been attributed to William Dugard. And then there is the problem of whether the *Dedication*'s real interest lies in what it has to tell us about Sidney himself or whether its importance lies in its part as one of Greville's works. If we accept that it is not a "life" in the sense in which we understand it,

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the forms which he was working in, chose not to. He was writing twenty-five or thirty years after Sidney's death and nearly half a century after they had been enrolled on the same day at Shrewsbury School, and his true feelings about his old friend seem impenetrable even to himself.

John Gouws has performed a valuable service in making an accurate text of Greville's *Dedication* available. There is still certainly more to be found about Greville's sources and his intentions in writing the work. Gouws's notes are useful and at times very thorough, but if there is one slight criticism to be made of his edition as a whole it is that it suffers from a disappointing lack of curiosity about what Greville is up to and what he has to say. While there are a small number of irritating errors and inconsistencies in the edition, its typography and design leave a great deal to be desired: the inking of some lines and single letters in the texts is very uneven and the spacing of the textual variants is so irregular as at times to make them look ludicrous. Readers should not be faced with this in a book from the Clarendon Press, costing £40 for under 300 pages.

triumph o'er thy self" the lines echoed are these, here quoted from the Third Folio: Not *Cassius* Votour hath o'er-thrown *Anthony*, But *Anthony* hath Triumphed on it self.

In the First Folio version, where the second word of the second line is "*Antionie's*", the grammatical construction is somewhat different, and "valour" has to be understood as the subject of "hath Triumphed". It was the Second Folio that introduced the change by replacing the possessive ending with a comma, and the Third Folio then merely tidied away the superfluous punctuation and modernized the spelling. Since Dryden's echo corresponds in sense to F2-F3 rather than F1, it seems probable that the text he had in mind was one of the later folios, and it is primarily for making and exploring such observations that a full set of Shakespeare folios is useful to literary scholars.

Hitherto, short of consulting the original folios themselves, it has been necessary to turn to the Methuen facsimiles of 1904-09. The Brewer facsimiles now provide another possibility, although not, unfortunately, a satisfactory one. The Charlton Hinman First Folio of 1968 is the standard of excellence, yet the Brewer volumes could hardly be expected to measure up to that achievement, for Hinman was able to select thirty of the Folger Library's eighty First Folios to supply, between them, ideal copy for his photographers. More recently, Kenneth Muir and Michael J. B. Allen have provided, in a less elaborate venture, none the less excellent facsimiles of Shakespeare quartos, photographed mainly, but not exclusively, from copies at the Huntington Library. Both these important publications were produced with skill and care, and offer the necessary finesse of tonal reproduction. The Brewer volumes, on the other hand, like the old Methuen ones, print only black on white, and to a great many places do so with much less success than those Methuen volumes. All too often detail is uncertain. But while it was not feasible to exploit a range of copies on the luxurious Hinman scale, Marvin Spevack, who selected the three Brewer copy-texts from Cambridge college libraries, should have used more than a single original for each volume. Although Hinman took only some 180 pages out of about 900 from each of his two best copies, comparison of the worst Brewer pages with the same pages in my local Second, Third and Fourth Folios shows that even if Spevack had been limited to just two copies of each folio the result could have been much better. As it happens, the Queens' College copy of the Third Folio selected by Spevack is so often under-inked and so badly disfigured by blots that it is quite unsuitable for reproduction. Despite being very expensive, these facsimiles are, in places, simply unreadable. Furthermore, the light bindings are too flimsy for books of this type and price, while the lazy replication of the some prefatory material in all three volumes is almost unbelievably offhand.

about how he thought the *New* might end — or more oddly, about Sidney's other literary works. He fails to mention that Sidney was married. He does not account for his own silence amid the public wailings in print that followed Sidney's death. Greville has some good circumstantial stories about Sidney — the episode of the tennis-court quarrel with the Earl of Oxford in 1579 and Sidney's magnificent gesture of giving his water-bottle to a dying common soldier on the battlefield at Zutphen — but his accounts of these and other occasions may not be absolutely accurate and may not have been intended to be taken so such. Nevertheless Greville is our only source for a few incidents which contribute something to our knowledge of Sidney. For example, if it were not for Greville we should not know that Sidney lodged in the printer Andreas Wechel's house in Frankfurt, nor that he wanted to lead Drake's 1585 expedition to the West Indies. And yet all too often Greville's own motives for including or suppressing stories and information, or simply getting facts wrong, are unclear. Greville could have said so much about his friend, but for reasons which cannot simply be dismissed as due to the demands of

Blotting a thousand

H. Neville Davies

MARVIN SPEVACK (Editor)
Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories and Tragedies Published According to the True Originall Copies: The Second, Third and Fourth Folio editions reproduced in facsimile
Cambridge: Brewer, £350 the set.
0859911993

When the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays was published in folio by his old associates in 1623, the Bodleian Library at Oxford acquired a copy, no doubt in accordance with the happy arrangement whereby the Stationers' Company undertook to deposit books there that the Company had registered. This particular volume, with a shop price of £1, was in due course stoutly bound by William Wildgoose for library use, and, after being chained to a press, became available to university readers. Some years later, however, it was disposed of, almost certainly as a superseded item when a new and expanded edition of Shakespeare, which included "seven Playes, never before Printed in Folio", was accessioned in 1664. With hindsight, even an out-and-out bibliophile can see that the decision to discard the old 1623 volume in favour of a new Third Folio was a blunder. Though not rare, First Folios were to become valuable assets: a fine copy was sold in 1980 for £269,430, and a shabby copy for £80,000. But some 240 years later, the ejected copy, minus its title-page, came to light in the hands of an undergraduate, the Wildgoose binding and evidence of former attachment to a chain revealing its origin. After some desperate money-raising the volume was bought back at a price of £2,800, that is, more than a dozen times the largest sum previously paid by the Bodleian for a single volume, well above the then going rate for a First Folio, but £200 less than a rival transatlantic offer.

In fact there is reason for scholarly libraries to possess all four seventeenth-century Shakespeare folios, the only complete collections of the plays (albeit lacking *Pericles* in 1623 and 1632) before the advent of multi-volume octavo sets; prepared by named editors, established a new mode in the eighteenth century. The folios of 1623, 1664, 1709 and 1763 have no independent textual authority, of course, but they show the earliest attempts to present Shakespeare's plays to a reading public for whom Shakespeare's language and culture were fast becoming old-fashioned. Viewed from the Restoration world that the Third Folio was intended to serve, the age of Shakespeare already seemed remote, even mythic, the Elizabethans baving taken on the character of a "glant race before the flood". Dryden, who used those words, was notably well versed in the text of Shakespeare; but which text? When, for instance, in his Shakespearean play *All for Love*, his Cleopatra says of Antony, "Only thou / Cou'dst

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A modern Daniel

Emma Letley

BEL MOONEY
The Stove Haunting
125pp. Methuen. £8.95.
0416 595502

Set in the West Country in the year of the prosecution of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, *The Stove Haunting* (Bel Mooney's first book for older children and written for her own son), tells the story of Daniel Richards, a twentieth-century eleven-year-old whose parents move from London to an old rectory in the country village of Winterstoke. Daniel, loner and dreamer, becomes mysteriously attracted by an old stove in the kitchen of his new home; sitting by it, and peering inside it, he hears the words "we can't change things". He is then transported back in time to the turbulent events of 1835.

In 1835, Daniel is a charity-child, an orphan taken in by the Revd and Mrs Forster; he "awakes" in a world where he is a stove boy and kitchen skivvy who is unable to read. He has one great friend, George, a farm-worker, through whom he becomes involved in the plight of a family of starving farm labourers. Slowly, Daniel loses his twentieth-century awareness as he becomes absorbed in the events in the nineteenth-century village; he watches the farm workers join together in early trade union (or Friendly Society) meetings get under way, learns how the Masters betray their promise to increase wages, and, with some dramatic incidents, tries to protect his friend George from arrest. George is saved but five other Winterstoke men are apprehended, tried, and sentenced to seven years' transportation in Australia. George asks Daniel to leave his safe life with the Forsters and come with him, travelling around the country telling people about the Winterstoke men and taking to the newly-formed trade unions.

At this point of dilemma, Daniel falls into unconsciousness to wake up in his new home in the Winterstoke of today. Insisting that it was not merely a dream (although the dream frame unobtrusively contains the narrative) Daniel is at first frustrated that he will never know the end of his own story; but then, in the graveyard of his home village he finds a gravestone commemorating Daniel Richards who had remained a servant to the Forster family all his life and died aged seventy. The modern Daniel comes to understand that perhaps his experience was more than a dream; the tears and hard work of the original Daniel had so "impregnated this old stove that his spirit had once again been released for Daniel to join".

The Stove Haunting is an accomplished and absorbing fantasy for children of about eleven and older; the intervention of past history in a present-day story (a technique much favoured by writers for children) is skilfully handled; and the borderline between past and present sensitively controlled. There is a real sense of the dangers and excitement of change and of contrasting reactions to it. The tone is assured except for a few occasions when the reader feels bullied: history, thinks the contemporary Daniel, is always about kings and queens and never about ordinary people. *The Stove Haunting* is a little too intent on proving that this is not the case, and on insinuating in the youthful reader an enthusiasm similar to that of the author's own son who, we are told in the dedication, "is interested in the past". This educative note does not, however, seriously damage a strange and compelling story.

Real-life folk

Iain Bamforth

GORDON JARVIS
The Wild Ride and other Scottish Stories
144pp. Viking Kestrel. £5.95.
0670 80987 X

In his introduction to this collection of children's tales, which he has edited for the immediately prepubertal age-group, Gordon Jarvis complains of suffering in his own childhood from a surfeit of stories based on the conventions of music-hall, folklore and history. He intends to provide stories about "ordinary people set in the modern real-life world" (any reasonably glib eleven-year-old is permitted to wonder just how many worlds there are impatiently attending his development), but it is difficult to escape the impression that the stories grouped in this volume themselves suffer from a peculiar datedness. With the exception of Joan Lingard's "Silver Linings", all have previously appeared in other collections; almost without exception they represent a rural rather than urban experience, and those folkloric and historical tendencies that cluttered the editor's childhood are not, it seems, to be entirely suppressed. There is much revealing in ghostly occurrences, poaching and sailing adventures, revindications of conventional adult wisdom and religious conflict in a marginal adult world which threatens to oppress the far more tolerant childish domain.

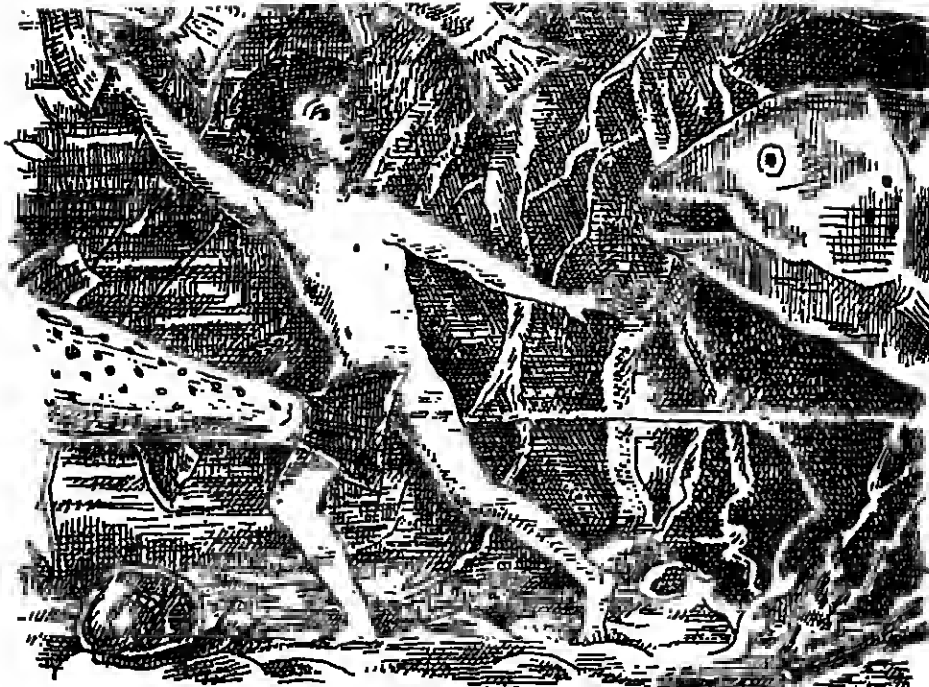
What distinguishes these stories, and indeed, what is particularly Scottish about them, is their humour, which is wry and dry and only occasionally sentimental. There are fine contributions from the most prolific and best-known of Scottish short story writers - Iain Crichton Smith and George Mackay Brown - and an excellent piece which displays the most realistic (modern real-life worldish; that is, sensibility among the authors in this collection, "The Mystery of the Beehive" by Bernard Mac Laverly tells of a young boy, on holiday for the first time on his uncle's farm in Scotland, whose curiosity gets the better of him and who discovers, hidden in a canvas bag in one of the beehives which he tends, the remains of an old Russian émigré's past: a collection of imperial roubles and a heap of soil. He is caught in the act of discovery and after an initially harsh rebuke from the old man, learns of his lonely

ness and flight from the pogroms in Russia, and understands the significance of these visible residues of memory from a past that is unrecoverable. Without preaching or being obviously parabolic, the story conveys well the sense of a childish mind on the frontier of adulthood, suddenly enlarged and encompassed at the same time.

But the most brilliantly observant and psychologically precise story is "Sunday Class" by the much-undervalued Elspeth Davis. Despite its brevity, it evokes with considerable humour the conflict between poetic childishness and prosaic adulthood. This is surely the only qualification for a story intended for reading by a ten or eleven-year-old and it is interesting that Davis's story appears not to have been expressly written for children at all.

The most recent Signal bookguide is *Classics for Children and Young People* (72pp. Tumble Press, Lockwood, Station Road, South Woodchester, Stroud, Glos. GL5 5EQ. £3.50. 0 903335 20 5), in which Margery Fishar recommends books ranging from *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902) to *The Stone Book Quartet* (1976-8). The books are grouped in six sections ("The Listening Child", "Magic, New and Traditional", "Animals as Characters", "Neighbourhood Tales", "Danger and Endeavour" and "Landmarks"), which are briefly introduced and each book is given a short critical essay setting it in its literary context.

Also recently published is *Children's Books of the Year 1986*, edited by Julia Eccleshare (116pp. National Book League. Paperback, £3.50. 0 85353 402 0). The book contains an annotated list of 275 titles published over the past twelve months. The titles, which are briefly described, are divided into sections, such as "Picture Books", "Beginning to Read", "Fiction for Older Readers", "The Living World" and "Crafts and Hobbies", and there is a new classification of "Books to Read Aloud", which contains stories both for the very young and for the older child. In her introduction, Julia Eccleshare discusses the past year in children's publishing, noting, among other trends, the present "chill economic wind". *Children's Books of the Year* is available, post free, from the Publications Office, National Book League, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QZ.



Tom in the iron pool, from *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley. Gollancz's 1961 edition of the book, which has a text "specially prepared" by Kathleen Lines and illustrations by Harold Jones, has recently been reissued in paperback (£22pp. Gollancz. £3.95. 0 575 03879 9).

Dog days

Humphrey Carpenter

ALLAN AHLBERG
Wolf
Illustrated by Fritz Wegner
155pp. Viking Kestrel. £6.95.
0670 808326

Allan Ahlberg is a master of comic picture-book text-writing. Who can forget that resonant opening in his *Happy Families* series, "Mr and Mrs Hay were a horse", or the story of Mrs Wobble the Waitress, who wobbled everything all over everybody and eventually made her fame and fortune because of it? And perhaps still best of all is *The Boby's Catalogue*, in which there are no words at all, but behind Ahlberg's wife Janet's pictures lie whole chapters of unspoken text.

Wolf is a departure for Ahlberg, or rather, a move into the conventional form of a short novel for children. The oddest thing about it is the looseness of the writing. Freed from the straitness of the picture-book, Ahlberg understandably wants to enjoy himself with words. Unfortunately most of his personal qualities vanish in the process. There are now and then, some nice ironies, as in a school scene:

During assembly, Mr Blocker talked about how Jesus loved the little children and suffered them to come unto Him. He talked about some boys who'd been having a spitting competition in the back playground. He warned that what would happen if they did it again.

But most of the time, the narrative is deliberately flat. Worse, so is the plot.

Striking a chord

Craig Brown

ANTHONY HOROWITZ
The Falcon's Maltese
160pp. Grafton. £5.95.
000383 091 8

Those children embarking on their second decade who have only recently got over the shock of discovering that Santa Claus does not exist may be additionally traumatized by Anthony Horowitz's bloodthirsty thriller, "Ho Ho . . .", says Horowitz's department-store Santa, but he doesn't make the third "ho". The children surrounding him are left looking at "the body" twitching on the chair, at the red stuff that was staining his beard.

Blood guashes merrily in *The Falcon's Maltese*, even if the pigeons in Trafalgar Square gurgle and keel over after one of the many villains. A man on other occasions given to disposing of offending traffic wardens in concrete on the M6, feeds their playfully with poisoned chit-

Wolf! seems to be a sort of anti-story. Like Kafka's hero in "Metamorphosis", Eric Banks, lying in bed, finds he has turned into another creature - in his case a Norfolk terrier. He has some mild adventures as a dog, in fact all too mild - performing tricks outside the fish and chip shop, and finding his lost toddler sister at the school fête. When temporarily back in human form he confides his secret to his friend Roy. Together they puzzle out what may be going on. Their guesses are perfectly sensible, but they have to remain guesses, because at the end of the book Eric simply stops turning into a dog, and that is that. Possibly it is because sister Emily, who always wanted a dog, has now been given one. Perhaps it is she who unconsciously wished her brother into a dog? Or then again, perhaps not.

Fritz Wegner's illustrations are as flaccid as the story. Ahlberg shows some signs of wanting to conjure up the atmosphere of a suburban primary school and the back streets surrounding it, but even this is done half-heartedly. One hopes that, after this odd vacation from his real vocation, he will get back to Mr and Mrs Hay the Horse and others of their kind.

The winner of the 1986 Children's Book of the Year Award is Janet Collins for *Bory* (Blackie), which also won the 1984 Kathleen Topley Award. The judges for this year's Maecenas Prize for new work by young illustrators have recently been announced. They are Quentin Blake, Raymond Briggs, Jill Murphy and Michael Wace. Entries should be sent to Macmillan Children's Books by the middle of March 1987 and the winner will be announced in May 1987.

And when the humour is not red, it is most certainly black. At one point, the young hero, a thirteen-year-old private detective, goes into a London restaurant called "Grannies" where he is served by a waitress using a walking-frame. Any child with a quick sense of humour should love it.

The Falcon's Maltese is, as its title suggests, a parody of Raymond Chandler for children. Even if children find it hard to cope with the Chanderlesque machinations of the plot they should chortle at the abundance of jokes, most of them first-class: the "brilliant but crooked" professor who "invented computer fraud"; the hero's stupid older brother Harlow, who files bills under "W" for waste-paper; the book will appeal particularly to streetwise London children, who will recognize the Hotel Splendide, owned by Jack Splendide, the poshness of Hampstead where "even the dustbins had burglar alarms" and "Can I hit him?" "Not yet, Boyle" striking a chord.

Paperbacks

Art and architecture

RENÉ GIMPÉL. *Diary of an Art Dealer*. Translated by John Rosenberg. 465pp. Hamish Hamilton. £6.95. 0 241 11761 5. Gimpé was the son of a famous art dealer and inherited galleries in Paris and New York. He died in a Nazi concentration camp in 1944, but these diaries cover the happier years between the wars. Crammed with marvellous cameos - of Marie Laurencin, Picasso ("his brown eyes like very worn counters in a child's game"), the ageing Renoir painting with brush tied to his arthritic fingers - this moving, well-translated book is essential reading for anyone interested in early modernism. The original French edition, *Journal d'un collectionneur*, was reviewed in the TLS of March 5, 1964.

JAMES LEES-MILNE. *The Earls of Creation*. 267pp. Century. £5.95. 0 7126 9464 1. In a field now increasingly covered by specialist scholarly studies *The Earls of Creation*, first published in 1962 and reviewed in the TLS of January 18, 1963, has a certain quaintness. James Lees-Milne illuminates the history of English taste in the first half of the eighteenth century through combined character-studies and art-historical assessments of five earls. His main thrust is devoted to the establishment of the Palladian orthodoxy under Burlington, Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, and the ninth Earl of Pembroke. The quintet is made up by the first Earl Bathurst, friend of Pope and layer-out of the vast and still intact formal park and woods at Cirencester; and, less convincingly, Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford, and his literary and artistic circle. The novelistic elegance and colour of the writing, and its pleasantly snobbish tone, do something to make up for the lack of illustrations.

Film

JEAN COCTEAU. *Beauty and the Beast: Diary of a film*. Translated by Ronald Duncan. 142pp. Dover/Constable. £6.50. 0 486 27766 6. Conceived in the last year of the war, made in the first year of the peace, Cocteau's second movie was a heroic undertaking. His eloquent diary, one of the best personal accounts of a *cinéma* work, covers his day-to-day travails from the eve of shooting in August 1945, when the fifty-six-year-old director was coping with painful crutches on his chest, to the first preview in June 1946 when Marlene Dietrich was there to hold his hand. Plagued by bad weather on location, power cuts in the studio, a shortage of everything (including decent film-stock), accidents and illnesses, a dedicated team of artists and technicians struggled on to help Cocteau realize his beautiful "realistic" fantasy. "We're counting on your work to re-establish French films," he's told; and he saw the picture as a redemptive act after the experience of the Occupation: "Five years of hate, fear, a waking nightmare. Five years of shame and slime. We were spat upon and smeared with it even to our very souls. We had to survive . . . Whatever the cost, France must shine again." His technical adviser, René Clément, had just completed the classic semi-documentary tribute to the Resistance, *La Bataille du rail*; Cocteau's response was the way of the poet.

History

BRUNO BETTELHEIM. *Surviving the Holocaust*. 220pp. Flamingo. £3.50. 0 00 654178 X. This is a collection of essays on the psychology of the Nazi death camps, analyses of perpetrators, victims and onlookers. The earliest, "Individual and Mass Behaviour in Extreme Situations", appeared in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* in 1943 and was noted, remarkably, on interviews conducted by the author and two assistants while they were prisoners in the concentration camps of Dachau and Buchenwald in 1938-9. Bettelheim is a most scrupulous writer and does not flinch from uncomfortable fields of inquiry. Later pieces include discussions of the difficulties of opposing Nazism from within, the Jewish passivity as exemplified by the family of Anne Frank, and of what it took to survive with the camps in the context of a powerful "even the dustbins had burglar alarms" and "Can I hit him?" "Not yet, Boyle" striking a chord.

into what made people do it, what it was like to undergo, *Surviving the Holocaust* is an important book. Excepting a new introduction, it was first published in 1979 as part of *Surviving and Other Essays*.

Literature

WALTER ALLEN. *Tradition and Dream*. 358pp. The Hogarth Press. £4.50. 0 7012 0692 6. Twenty years after Walter Allen's sequel to the much reprinted *The English Novel* was first published (in 1964 and reviewed in the TLS of February 13 that year), his rigour and enthusiasm are as fresh as ever. After pointing to an initial distinction between the English novel, its characters rooted in society, and the American, in which they are outside it, Allen neatly shows how they have developed, even merged, during the century. The landmarks are there, the praise is never dutiful; without becoming whistle-stop, the guide to the land between them is made absorbing. Time has frequently come round to him (Green, Welch, May Sinclair, Lewis), but he remains refreshingly apart from fashion: "remarkable as it [Pilgrimage] is, once having read it, one feels little wish to return to it". Others - Robert Liddell, Glenway Westcott, James Hinxley - await wide recognition. The process is echoed in the new afterword. Allen's knowledge is such that one points to omissions - Elizabeth Taylor, Woodhouse, Dawn Powell, Roven, Nabokov - without rancour.

FRANCES BEER (Editor). *The Invention of Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë*. 389pp. Penguin. £2.95. 0 14 043267 1. These two anthologies of precocity make curious bedfellows but in one respect the resemblance is striking: each appears as a crude, alarmingly energetic caricature of the mature work which was to follow. From Austen, cruel, very funny little poison-pen portraits of carnivorous daughters on the look-out for husbands; from Brontë an astonishing and seemingly interminable romance written over a period of years (here much cut) featuring the son of the Duke of Wellington who becomes more darkly sinister with each improbable adventure that he encounters. There are sufficient riches down here at the bottom of the barrel to amuse the average interested reader, even if Frances Beer's introduction protests too much on their behalf.

ADAM PHILLIPS (Editor). *Charles Lamb: Selected prose*. 438pp. Penguin. £4.95. 0 14 043238 8. Charles Lamb, self-confessed "bundle of prejudices, the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies", has been well served by Adam Phillips - this is a splendid selection of the quickly brilliant prose, all the more welcome for the space it devotes to Lamb's letters, masterpieces of Falstaffian wit and humanity. Inevitably, in such a compact selection there are serious omissions (the Penguin *Portable Charles Lamb*, which this has replaced, was more comprehensive). Nevertheless, this is a fine introduction to the most endearing of the English Romantics.

JULIAN SYMONS. *A. J. A. Symons: His life and speculations*. 289pp. Oxford University Press. £4.95. 0 19 281916 X. A. J. A. Symons was one of those dandified inter-war literati who might have been born only to feature later in the pages of an Anthony Powell novel. In fact, as emerges from this affectionately ironic biography by his younger brother, "A.J." (a style of address adopted early on to conceal the shameful "Alphonse" of his Christian name) was energetic, inventive and hard-working (at least initially) in support of his pet projects, such as the First Edition Society and the Wine and Food Society. Out of the disorganization, the financial peaks and troughs, the writer's block, emerged A. J.'s undisputed achievement, *The Quest for Corvo*; his innovative and widely acclaimed biography of Frederick Rolfe, the Nineties writer whose ineffectual life seems to have struck a particular chord with Symons. In an afterword to this paperback edition of *A. J. A. Symons*, which was first published in 1950 (and reviewed in the TLS of March 17 of that year), Julian Symons is mildly concerned that he might have drawn too unfavourable a portrait of his brother, but the work itself seems to belie this, being calm, humorous and just, if perhaps over-detailed about A. J.'s collapsed marriage.

VIRGINIA WOOLF. *Three Guineas*. 206pp. Hogarth Press. £3.95. 0 7012 0701 9. Anger boils to the surface of this sequel to *A Room of One's Own*, replacing the urbane conversational charm of the earlier essay. The central theme linking patriarchy and fascism hrougth accusations of "silly", "odd", and "muddled" from Virginia Woolf's contemporaries in 1938 (though it received a long, highly favourable review in the TLS of June 4). Today the book stands as a seminal, explosive polemic on women, education, exclusion and war. The text is studded with damning facts and quotations, surrounded by a further layer of subversion packed like bundles of dynamite in the footnotes. It is now being rediscovered as a standard feminist work; yet Woolf regarded "feminism" as a "false and futile" label. An excellent candidate for reprint, with a useful introduction by Hermione Lee. Woolf's *The Common Reader, Second Series* (330pp. Hogarth Press. £4.95. 0 7012 1908 4) is a selection of essays from over 100 written between 1926 and 1931. John Donne, Defoe, Parson Woodforde, Mary Wollstonecraft, Swift's *Journal to Stella*, Hazlitt and De Quincey are among the subjects under her perceptive scrutiny, rounded off with the meditation on "How should one read a book?" - at least part of the purpose of reading, she concludes, is "not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers". It was reviewed in the TLS of October 20, 1932.

Reference

GERALD R. STEWART. *A Concise Dictionary of American Place Names*. 550pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19 503725 1. As if to make up for allowing Richard Ellman to drop Stephen Vincent Benet's "American Names" (with its eloquent concluding request, "Bury my heart at Wounded Knee") from *The New Oxford Book of American Verse*, his publishers have re-issued at a bargain price this classic etymological gazetteer. Stewart covers some 12,000 of the approximately 3,500,000 place-names in the United States, preceding them with a fascinating essay on the taxonomy of naming. None is older than Florida ("flowered, flowery"), the first American place named by a European (the Spanish explorer Ponce de León, on April 2, 1513); none is more recent than Truth or Consequences, the new name adopted by the citizens of Hot Springs, New Mexico, on March 31, 1950, so that the radio quiz show of that title would be broadcast once a year from their remote township. E. T. City, Utah, however, has no show-business or uncouthly connection - like the majority of US names it derives from a person, in this case an early settler called E. T. Beeson. The peculiar name of Peculiar, Missouri, was chosen because the local postmaster was told that he must choose a peculiar name - there can be no duplication within a state. Oddly, Stewart does not list Hailey, Idaho, where Ezra Pound was born, nor nearby Keichum, where Ernest Hemingway died.

Science

KENDRICK FRAZIER (Editor). *Science Confronts the Paranormal*. 367pp. Prometheus Books, 700 East Amherst Street, Buffalo, NY 14215. \$15.95. 0 87975 314 5. A selection of thirty-eight fairly polemic papers from the *Skeptical Inquirer*, the provocative American magazine "devoted to the critical investigation of pseudoscience from a scientific viewpoint". The field of battle ranges from Koestlerian coincidence and the testing of "psychics" in laboratory experiments to Turin and Loch Ness, as well as spoon-bending, palm reading and UFOs. Contributors include Martin Gardner, Isaac Asimov and the redoubtable scourge of the psychics, the nagician James "the Amazing" Randi. Of necessity, the essays are brief and the tone repetitively combative, but the essays are sustained on the whole by bracing good sense and there are many fine moments.

Reviews by: Andrew Graham-Dixon, Ann Hollinghurst, Christopher Hawtree, Sean French, J.K.L. Walker, Anne Boston, and Philip French.

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